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THE

# CHURCH AND THE AGE

AN EXPOSITION OF THE CATHOLIC CHURCH IN VIEW OF THE NEEDS AND ASPIRATIONS OF THE PRESENT AGE

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BY

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# NOTICE.

THIS book is made up of twelve articles, which fall into five general divisions. The first division, consisting of five articles, treats of the Catholic Church in relation to races, nations, and epochs, dealing with the subject at first in general and then more particularly of Church and State in America, Italy, and France. The second general division, beginning with the sixth article, is mainly devoted to the concord of the interior action of the Holy Spirit in each particular soul with His exterior action in the public authority of the Church; it embraces the articles entitled respectively "St. Catherine of Genoa," "Catholicity and the Tendencies of the Age," and "The Experiment of Protestantism." The fourth division—articles ix. and x.—treats of orthodox and historical Protestantism, and the fifth —articles xi. and xii.—of Unitarianism and Transcendentalism. But as the same general principles run through them all, the articles have not been marked off into these general divisions, but are numbered consecutively from first to last.

Intelligence and liberty are not a hindrance but a help to religious life; only false religion has reason to fear the spread of enlightenment and the enjoyment of our free civil institutions; while intellectual development and civil liberty have accelerated more than anything else the decay of Protestantism, they are calculated more than any other human environments to advance at the present time the progress of true supernatural life among men.

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The main purpose of this volume is to show that the liberty enjoyed in modern society, in so far as it is true, and the intelligence of modern society, in so far as it is guileless, are inestimable helps to the spread of Catholicity and the deepening of that interior spirit which is the best result of true religion.

The office of divine external authority in religious affairs in providing a safeguard to the individual soul and assisting it to a freer and more instinctive co-operation with the Holy Spirit's interior inspirations, is often treated of in this book; and the false liberty of pride and error is plainly pointed out.

The logical order would, perhaps, place the articles dealing with old-fashioned Protestantism first, then those on Unitarianism, etc. But whatever the logical order may claim, the order of actual facts relegates our disputes with genuine Protestantism mostly to out-of-the-way neighborhoods where the currents of intellectual life have stagnated; hence such articles have been relegated to places other than the most conspicuous. The main question of the hour is, How can religion be made compatible with a high degree of liberty and intelligence?

Readers who remember these articles as they originally appeared in *The Catholic World* will perceive that some have been abridged, verbal corrections occasionally made, and dates and names of places of no present interest omitted. In a few cases the titles of articles have been changed, the better to indicate the unity of thought in the whole series.

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# I.

# THE CHURCH, IN VIEW OF THE NEEDS OF THE AGE.

## The Question Stated.

THE Catholic Church throughout the world, beginning at Rome, is in a suffering state. There is scarcely a spot on the earth where she is not assailed by injustice, oppression, or violent persecution. Like her Divine Author in His Passion, every member has its own trial of pain to endure. All the gates of hell have been opened, and every species of attack, as by general conspiracy, has been let loose at once upon the Church.

Countries in which Catholics outnumber all other Christians put together, as France, Austria, Italy, Spain, Bavaria, Baden, South America, Brazil, and, until recently, Belgium, are for the most part controlled and governed by hostile minorities, and in some instances the minority is very small.

Her adversaries with the finger of derision point out these facts and proclaim them to the world. Look, they say, at Poland, Ireland, Portugal, Spain, Bavaria, Austria, Italy, France, and what do you see? Countries subjugated or enervated, or agitated by the internal throes of revolution. Everywhere among Catholic nations weakness only and incapacity are to be discerned. This is the result of the priestly domination and hierarchical influence of Rome!

Heresy and schism, false philosophy, false science, and false art, cunning diplomacy, infidelity and atheism, one and all boldly raise up their heads and attack the Church in the face; while secret societies of world-wide organization are stealthily engaged in undermining her strength with the people. Even the sick man, the Turk, who lives at the beck of the so-called Christian nations, has impudently kicked the Church of Christ, knowing full well there is no longer in Europe any power which will openly raise a voice in her defence.

How many souls, on account of this dreadful war waged against the Church, are now suffering in secret a bitter agony! How many are hesitating, knowing not what to do, and looking for guidance! How many are wavering between hope and fear! Alas! too many have already lost the faith.

Culpable is the silence and base the fear which would restrain one's voice at a period when God, the Church, and Religion are everywhere either openly denied, boldly attacked, or fiercely persecuted. In such trying times as these silence or fear is betrayal.

The hand of God is certainly in these events, and it is no less certain that the light of divine faith ought to discern it. Through these clouds which now obscure the Church the light of divine hope ought to pierce, enabling us to perceive a better and a brighter future, for this is what is in store for the Church and the world. That love which embraces at once the greatest glory of God and the highest happiness of man should outweigh all fear of misinterpretations, and urge one to make God's hand clear to those who are willing to see, and point out to them the way to that happier and fairer future.

What, then, has brought about this most deplorable state of things? How can we account for this apparent lack of faith and strength on the part of Catholics? Can it be true, as their enemies assert, that Catholicity, wherever it has full sway, deteriorates society? Or is it contrary to the spirit of Christianity that Christians should strive with all their might to overcome evil in this world? Perhaps the Catholic Church has grown old,

others imagine, and has accomplished her task, and is no longer competent to unite together the conflicting interests of modern society and direct it towards its true destination?

These questions are most serious ones. Their answers must be fraught with most weighty lessons. Only a meagre outline of the course of argument can be here given in so vast a field of investigation.

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## Remote Cause of Present Difficulties.

One of the chief features of the history of the Church for these last three centuries has been its conflict with the religious revolution of the sixteenth century, properly called Protestantism. The nature of Protestantism may be defined as the exaggerated development of personal independence, directed to the negation of the divine authority of the Church, and chiefly aiming at its overthrow in the person of its supreme representative, the Pope.

It is a fixed law, founded in the very nature of the Church, that every serious and persistent denial of a divinely revealed truth necessitates its vigorous defence, calls out its greater development, and ends, finally, in its dogmatic definition.

The history of the Church is replete with instances of this fact. One must suffice. When Arius denied the divinity of Christ, which was always held as a divinely revealed truth, at once the doctors of the Church and the faithful were aroused in its defence. A General Council was called at Nice, and there this truth was defined and fixed for ever as a dogma of the Catholic faith. The law has always been, from the first Council at Jerusalem to that of the Vatican, that the negation of a revealed truth calls out its fuller development and its explicit dogmatic definition.

The Council of Trent refuted and condemned the errors of Protestantism at the time of their birth, and defined the truths against which they were directed, but for wise and sufficient reasons did not fully develop the dogmatic teaching on the objective point of attack, which was, necessarily, the divine authority of the Church. For there was no standing ground whatever for a protest against the Church, except in its denial. It would have been the height of absurdity to admit an authority, and that divine, and at the same time to refuse to obey its decisions. It was as well known then as to-day that the keystone of the whole structure of the Church was its head. To overthrow the Papacy was to conquer the Church.

The supreme power of the Church for a long period of years was the centre around which the battle raged between the adversaries and the champions of the faith.

The denial of the papal authority in the Church necessarily occasioned its fuller development. For as long as this hostile movement was aggressive in its assaults, so long was the Church constrained to strengthen her defence and make a stricter and more detailed application of her authority in every sphere of her action, in her hierarchy, in her general discipline, and in the personal acts of her children. Every new denial was met with a new defence and a fresh application. The danger was on the side of revolt, the safety was on that of submission. The poison was an exaggerated spiritual independence, the antidote was increased obedience to a divine external authority.

The chief occupation of the Church for the last three centuries was the maintenance of that authority conferred by Christ on St. Peter and his successors, in opposition to the efforts of Protestantism for its overthrow; and the contest was terminated for ever in the dogmatic definition of papal infallibility, by the Church assembled in council in the Vatican. Luther declared the Pope Antichrist; the Catholic Church affirmed the Pope to be the Vicar of Christ. Luther stigma-

tized the see of Rome as the seat of error; the Council of the Church defined the see of Rome, the chair of St. Peter, to be the infallible interpreter of divinely revealed truth. This definition closed the controversy.

In this pressing necessity of defending the papal authority of the Church the Society of St. Ignatius was born. It was no longer the refutation of the errors of the Waldenses and Albigenses that was required, nor were the dangers to be combated such as arise from a wealthy and luxurious society. The former had been met and overcome by the Dominicans; the latter by the children of St. Francis. But new and strange errors arose, and alarming threats from an entirely different quarter were heard. Fearful blows were aimed and struck against the keystone of the divine constitution of the Church, and millions of her children were in open revolt. In this great crisis, as in previous ones, Providence supplied new men and new weapons to meet the new perils. St. Ignatius, filled with faith and animated with heroic zeal, came to the rescue, and formed an army of men devoted to the service of the Church and specially suited to encounter its peculiar dangers. The Papacy was the point of attack: the members of his Society must be the champions of the Pope—his bodyguard. The papal authority was denied: the chil-

dren of St. Ignatius must make a special vow of obedience to the Holy Father. The prevailing sin of the time was disobedience: the members of his company must aim at becoming the perfect models of the virtue of obedience, men whose wills should never conflict with the authority of the Church, *perinde cadaver*. The distinguishing traits of a perfect Jesuit formed the antithesis of a thorough Protestant.

The Society founded by St. Ignatius undertook a heavy and an heroic task, one in its nature most unpopular, and requiring above all on the part of its members an entire abnegation of that which men hold dearest—their own will. It is no wonder that their army of martyrs is so numerous and their list of saints so long.

Inasmuch as the way of destroying a vice is to enforce the practice of its opposite virtue, and as the confessional and spiritual direction are appropriate channels for applying the authority of the Church to the conscience and personal actions of the faithful, the members of this Society insisted upon the frequency of the one and the necessity of the other. In a short period of time the Jesuits were considered the most skilful and were the most sought-after confessors and spiritual directors in the Church.

They were mainly instrumental, by the science of

their theologians, the logic of their controversialists, the eloquence of their preachers, the excellence of their spiritual writers, and, above all, by the influence of their personal example, in saving millions from following in the great revolt against the Church, in regaining millions who had gone astray, and in putting a stop to the numerical increase of Protestantism, almost within the generation in which it was born.

To their labors and influence it is chiefly owing that the distinguishing mark of a sincere Catholic for the last three centuries has been a special devotion to the Holy See, and a filial obedience to the voice of the Pope, the common Father of the faithful.

The logical outcome of the existence of the Society founded by St. Ignatius of Loyola was the dogmatic definition of Papal Infallibility; for this was the final word of victory of Divine Truth over the specific error which the Jesuits were specially called to combat.

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### Proximate Cause of Timidity.

The Church, while resisting Protestantism, had to give her principal attention and apply her main strength to those points which were attacked. Like a wise strategist she drew off her forces from

the places which were secure, and directed them to those posts where danger threatened. As she was most of all engaged in the defence of her external authority and organization, the faithful, in view of this defence, as well as in regard to the dangers of the period, were specially guided to the practice of the virtue of obedience. Is it a matter of surprise that the character of the virtues developed was more passive than active? The weight of authority was placed on the side of restraining rather than that of developing personal independent action.

The exaggeration of personal authority on the part of Protestants brought about in the Church its greater restraint, in order that her divine authority might have its legitimate exercise and exert its salutary influence. The errors and evils of the times sprang from an unbridled personal independence, which could be only counteracted by habits of increased personal dependence. *Contraria contrariis curantur.* The defence of the Church and the salvation of the soul were ordinarily secured at the expense, necessarily, of those virtues which properly go to make up the strength of Christian manhood.

The gain was the maintenance and victory of divine truth and the salvation of the soul. The loss was a certain falling-off in energy, resulting in

decreased action in the natural order. The former was a permanent and inestimable gain. The latter was a temporary and not irreparable loss. There was no room for a choice. The faithful were placed in a position in which it became their unqualified duty to put into practice the precept of our Lord when He said: "*It is better for thee to enter into life maimed or lame, than, having two hands or two feet, to be cast into everlasting fire.*" *

In the principles above briefly stated may in a great measure be found the explanation why fifty millions of Protestants have had generally a controlling influence, for a long period, over two hundred millions of Catholics, in directing the movements and destinies of nations. To the same source may be attributed the fact that Catholic nations, when the need was felt of a man of great personal energy at the head of their affairs, seldom hesitated to choose for prime minister an indifferent Catholic or a Protestant, or even an infidel. These principles explain also why Austria, France, Bavaria, Spain, Italy, and other Catholic countries have yielded to a handful of active and determined radicals, infidels, Jews, or atheists, and have been compelled to violate or annul their concordats with the Holy See, and to change their political institutions in a direction hostile to the interests of the

* St. Matthew xviii. 8.

Catholic religion. Finally, herein lies the secret why Catholics are at this moment almost everywhere oppressed and persecuted by very inferior numbers. In the natural order the feebler are always made to serve the stronger. Evident weakness on one side, in spite of superiority of numbers, provokes on the other, where there is consciousness of power, subjugation and oppression.

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## Is there a Way Out?

Is divine grace given only at the cost of natural strength? Is a true Christian life possible only through the sacrifice of a successful natural career? Are things to remain as they are at present?

The general history of the Catholic religion in the past condemns these suppositions as the grossest errors and falsest calumnies. Behold the small numbers of the faithful and their final triumph over the great, colossal Roman Empire! Look at the subjugation of the countless and victorious hordes of the Northern barbarians! Witness again the prowess of the Knights of the Church, who were her champions in repulsing the threatening Mussulman; every one of whom, by the rule of their order, was bound not to flinch before two Turks!

Call to mind the great discoveries made in all branches of science, and the eminence in art displayed by the children of the Church, and which underlie, if there were only honesty enough to acknowledge it, most of our modern progress and civilization! Long before Protestantism was dreamed of Catholic states in Italy had reached a degree of wealth and glory which no Protestant nation—it is the confession of one of their own historians—has since attained.

There is, then, no reason in the nature of things why the existing condition of Catholics throughout the world should remain as it is. The blood that courses through our veins, the graces given in our baptism, the light of our faith, the divine life-giving bread we receive, are all the same gifts and privileges which we have in common with our great ancestors. We are the children of the same mighty mother, ever fruitful of heroes and great men. The present state of things is neither fatal nor final, but only one of the many episodes in the grand history of the Church of God.

No better evidence is needed of the truth of the statements just made than the fact that all Catholics throughout the world are ill at ease with things as they are. The world at large is agitated as it never has been before with problems which enter into the essence of religion or are closely connected

therewith. Many serious minds are occupied with the question of the renewal of religion and the regeneration of society. The aspects in which questions of this nature are viewed are as various as the remedies proposed are numerous. Here are a few of the more important ones.

One class of men would begin by laboring for the reconciliation of all Christian denominations, and would endeavor to establish unity in Christendom as the way to universal restoration. Another class starts with the idea that the remedy would be found in giving a more thorough and religious education to youth in schools, colleges, and universities. Some would renew the Church by translating her liturgies into the vulgar tongues, by reducing the number of her forms of devotion, and by giving to her worship greater simplicity. Others, again, propose to alter the constitution of the Church by the practice of universal elections in the hierarchy, by giving the lay element a larger share in the direction of ecclesiastical matters, and by establishing national churches. There are those who hoped for a better state of things by placing Henry V. on the throne of France, and Don Carlos on that of Spain. Others, contrariwise, having lost all confidence in princes, look forward with great expectations to a baptized democracy, a holy Roman democracy, just as formerly there was a holy

Roman Empire. Not a few are occupied with the idea of reconciling capital with labor, of changing the tenure of property, and abolishing standing armies. Others propose a restoration of international law, a congress of nations, and a renewed and more strict observance of the Decalogue. According to another school, theological motives have lost their hold on the people, the task of directing society has devolved upon science, and its apostolate has begun. There are those, moreover, who hold that society can only be cured by an immense catastrophe, and one hardly knows what great cataclysm is to happen and save the human race. Finally, we are told that the reign of Antichrist has begun, that signs of it are everywhere, and that we are on the eve of the end of the world.

These are only a few of the projects, plans, and remedies which are discussed, and which more or less occupy and agitate the public mind. How much truth or error, how much good or bad, each or all of these theories contain, would require a lifetime to find out.

But the remedy for our evils must be got at, to be practical, in another way. If a new life be imparted to the root of a tree, its effects will soon be seen in all its branches, twigs, and leaves. Is it not possible to get at the root of all our evils, and with a radical remedy renew at once the whole

face of things? Universal evils are not cured by specifics.

All things are to be viewed and valued as they bear on the destiny of man. Religion is the solution of the problem of man's destiny. Religion, therefore, lies at the root of everything which concerns man's true interest.

Religion means Christianity, to all men, or to nearly all, who hold to any religion among European nations. Christianity, intelligibly understood, signifies the Church, the Catholic Church. The Church is God acting through a visible organization directly on men, and, through men, on society.

The Church is the sum of all problems, and the most potent fact in the whole wide universe. It is therefore illogical to look elsewhere for the radical remedy of all our evils. It is equally unworthy of a Catholic to look elsewhere for the renewal of religion.

The meditation of the great truths of Christian faith is the source from which the inspiration must come, if society is to be regenerated and the human race directed to its true destination. He who looks to any other quarter for a radical and adequate remedy, and for true guidance, is doomed to failure and disappointment.

## Mission of the Holy Spirit.

It cannot be too deeply and firmly impressed on the mind that the Church is actuated by the instinct of the Holy Spirit, and to discern clearly its action, and to co-operate with it effectually, is the highest employment of our faculties, and at the same time the primary source of the greatest good to society.

Did we clearly see and understand the divine action of the Holy Spirit in the successive steps of the history of the Church, we should fully comprehend the law of all true progress. If in this latter period more stress was laid on the necessity of obedience to the external authority of the Church than in former days, it was, as has been shown, owing to the peculiar dangers to which the faithful were exposed. It would be an inexcusable mistake to suppose for a moment that the Holy Church, at any period of her existence, was ignorant or forgetful of the mission and office of the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit established the Church, and can He forget His own mission? It is true that He has to guide and govern through men, but He is the sovereign of men, and especially of those whom He has chosen as His immediate instruments.

The essential and universal principle which saves and sanctifies souls is the Holy Spirit. He it was

who called, inspired, and sanctified the patriarchs, the prophets, and saints of the old dispensation. The same Divine Spirit inspired and sanctified the apostles, the martyrs, and the saints of the new dispensation. The actual and habitual guidance of the soul by the Holy Spirit is the essential principle of all divine life. "I have taught the prophets from the beginning, and even till now I cease not to speak to all."* Christ's mission was to give the Holy Spirit more abundantly.

No one who reads the Holy Scriptures can fail to be struck with the repeated injunctions to turn our eyes inward, to walk in the divine presence, to see and taste and listen to God in the soul. These exhortations run all through the inspired books, beginning with that of Genesis and ending with the Revelation of St. John. "I am the Almighty God: walk before me, and be perfect,"† was the lesson which God gave to the patriarch Abraham. "Be still and see that I am God."‡ "O taste and see that the Lord is sweet: blessed is the man that hopeth in Him."§ God is the guide, the light of the living, and our strength. "God's kingdom is within you," said the Divine Master. "Know you not that you are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you?"‖ "For it is God

* Thomas à Kempis, book iii. 3. † Genesis xviii. 1.
‡ Psalm xlv. 11. § Psalm xxxiii. 9. ‖ 1 Corinth. iii. 16.

who worketh in you both to will and to accomplish, according to His will."* The object of divine revelation was to make known and to establish within the souls of men, and through them upon the earth, the kingdom of God.

In accordance with the Sacred Scriptures, the Catholic Church teaches that the Holy Spirit is infused, with all His gifts, into our souls by the sacrament of baptism, and that without His actual prompting or inspiration, and aid, no thought or act or even wish, tending directly towards our true destiny, is possible.

The whole aim of the science of Christian perfection is to instruct men how to remove the hindrances in the way of the action of the Holy Spirit, and how to cultivate those virtues which are most favorable to His solicitations and inspirations. Thus the sum of spiritual life consists in observing and yielding to the movements of the Spirit of God in our soul, employing for this purpose all the exercises of prayer, spiritual reading, sacraments, the practice of virtues, and good works.

That divine action which is the immediate and principal cause of the salvation and perfection of the soul claims by right its direct and main attention. From this source within the soul there will gradually come to birth the consciousness of the

* Philip. ii. 13.

indwelling presence of the Holy Spirit, out of which will spring a force surpassing all human strength, a courage higher than all human heroism, a sense of dignity excelling all human greatness. The light the age requires for its renewal can come only from the same source. The renewal of the age depends on the renewal of religion. The renewal of religion depends upon a greater effusion of the creative and renewing power of the Holy Spirit. The greater effusion of the Holy Spirit depends on the giving of increased attention to His movements and inspirations in the soul. The radical and adequate remedy for all the evils of our age, and the source of all true progress, consist in increased attention and fidelity to the action of the Holy Spirit in the soul. "Thou shalt send forth Thy spirit, and they shall be created: and Thou shalt renew the face of the earth." *

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## The Men the Age Demands.

This truth will be better seen by looking at the matter a little more in detail. The age, we are told, calls for men worthy of that name. Who are those worthy to be called men? Men, assuredly, whose intelligences and wills are divinely illuminated

* Psalm ciii. 30.

and fortified. This is precisely what is produced by the gifts of the Holy Spirit; they enlarge all the faculties of the soul at once.

The age is superficial; it needs the gift of Wisdom, which enables the soul to contemplate truth in its ultimate causes. The age is materialistic; it needs the gift of Intelligence, by the light of which the intellect penetrates into the essence of things. The age is captivated by a false and one-sided science; it needs the gift of Science, by the light of which is seen each order of truth in its true relations to other orders and in a divine unity. The age is in disorder, and is ignorant of the way to true progress; it needs the gift of Counsel, which teaches how to choose the proper means to attain an object. The age is impious; it needs the gift of Piety, which leads the soul to look up to God as the Heavenly Father, and to adore Him with feelings of filial affection and love. The age is sensual and effeminate; it needs the gift of Fortitude, which imparts to the will the strength to endure the greatest burdens, and to prosecute the greatest enterprises with ease and heroism. The age has lost and almost forgotten God; it needs the gift of Fear, to bring the soul again to God, and make it feel conscious of its responsibility and of its destiny.

Men endowed with these gifts are the men for

whom, if it but knew it, the age calls. Men whose minds are enlightened and whose wills are strengthened by an increased action of the Holy Spirit. Men whose souls are actuated by the gifts of the Holy Spirit. Men whose countenances are lit up with a heavenly joy, who breathe an air of inward peace, and act with a holy liberty and a resistless energy. One such soul does more to advance the kingdom of God than tens of thousands without those gifts. These are the men and this is the way, if the age could only be made to see and believe it, to universal restoration, universal reconciliation, and universal progress, as far as such boons are attainable.

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### The Church has Entered on this Way.

The men the age and its needs demand depend on a greater infusion of the Holy Spirit into the soul; and the Church has been already prepared for this event.

Can one suppose for a moment that so long, so severe a contest as that of the three centuries just passed, which, moreover, has cost so dearly, has not been fraught with the greatest utility to the Church? Does God ever allow His Church to

suffer loss in the struggle to accomplish her divine mission?

It is true that the powerful and persistent assaults of the errors of the sixteenth century against the Church forced her, so to speak, out of the usual orbit of her movement; but having completed her defence from all danger on that side, she is returning to her normal course, with increased agencies, thanks to that contest, and is entering upon a new and fresh phase of life, and upon a more vigorous action in every sphere of her existence. The chiefest of these agencies, and the highest in importance, was that of the definition concerning the nature of papal authority. For the definition of the Vatican Council, having rendered the supreme authority of the Church, which is the unerring interpreter and criterion of divinely revealed truth, more explicit and complete, has prepared the way for the faithful to follow, with greater safety and liberty, the inspirations of the Holy Spirit. The dogmatic papal definition of the Vatican Council is therefore the axis on which turn the new course of the Church, the renewal of religion, and the entire restoration of society.

O blessed fruit, purchased at the price of so hard a struggle, but which has gained for the faithful an increased divine illumination and force, and thereby the renewal of the whole face of the world!

It is easy to perceive how great a blunder the so-called "Old Catholics" committed in opposing the conciliar definition. They professed a desire to see a more perfect reign of the Holy Spirit in the Church, and by their opposition rejected, so far as in them lay, the very means of bringing it about!

This by the way; let us continue our course, and follow the divine action in the Church, which is the initiator and fountain-source of the restoration of all things.

What is the meaning of these many pilgrimages to holy places, to the shrines of great saints, the multiplication of novenas and new associations of prayer? Are they not evidence of increased action of the Holy Spirit in the faithful? Why, moreover, those cruel persecutions, vexatious fines, and numerous imprisonments borne until recently by the bishops, clergy, and laity of the Church? What is the secret of this stripping the Church of her temporal possessions and authority? These things have taken place by the divine permission. Have not all these inflictions increased greatly devotion to prayer, cemented more closely the unity of the faithful, and turned the attention of all members of the Church, from the highest to the lowest, to look for aid from whence it alone can come—from God?

These trials and sufferings of the faithful are the

first steps towards a better state of things. They detach from earthly things and purify the human side of the Church. From them will proceed light, and strength, and victory. *Per crucem ad lucem.* "If the Lord wishes that other persecutions should be suffered, the Church feels no alarm; on the contrary, persecutions purify her and confer upon her a fresh force and a new beauty. There are, in truth, in the Church certain things which need purification, and for this purpose those persecutions answer best which are launched against her by great politicians." Such is the language of Pius IX.*

These are only some of the movements, which are public. But how many souls in secret suffer sorely in seeing the Church in such tribulations, and pray for her deliverance with a fervor almost amounting to agony! Are not all these but so many preparatory steps to a Pentecostal effusion of the Holy Spirit on the Church, an effusion, if not equal in intensity to that of apostolic days, at least greater than it in universality? "If at no epoch of the Evangelical ages the reign of Satan was so generally welcome as in this our day, the action of the Holy Spirit will have to clothe itself with the

* January 15, 1872. This and the subsequent quotations of the words of Pius IX. are taken from *Actes et Paroles de Pie IX., par Auguste Roussel.* Paris, Palmé, 1874.

characteristics of an exceptional extension and force. The axioms of geometry do not appear to us more rigorously exact than this proposition. A certain indefinable presentiment of this necessity of a new effusion of the Holy Spirit for the actual world exists, and of this presentiment the importance ought not to be exaggerated; but yet it would seem rash to make it of no account." *

Is not this the meaning of the presentiment of Pius IX. when he said: "Since we have nothing, or next to nothing, to expect from men, let us place our confidence more and more in God, whose heart is preparing, as it seems to me, to accomplish, in the moment chosen by Himself, a great prodigy which will fill the whole earth with astonishment." †

Was not the same presentiment before the mind of De Maistre when he penned the following lines: "We are on the eve of the greatest of religious epochs . . . . It appears to me that every true philosopher must choose between these two hypotheses, either that a new religion is about to be formed, or that Christianity will be renewed in some extraordinary manner." ‡

* *Traité du St. Esprit*, par Mgr. Gaume, 1864.

† January 22, 1871.

‡ De Maistre, *Soirées de Saint-Pétersbourg*, X^e^ Soirée.

## Twofold Action of the Holy Spirit.

Before further investigation of this new phase of the Church, it would perhaps be well to set aside a doubt which might arise in the minds of some—namely, whether there is not danger in turning the attention of the faithful in a greater degree to the interior life and in the direction contemplated?

The enlargement of the field of action for the soul, without a true knowledge of the end and scope of the external authority of the Church, would only open the door to delusions, errors, and heresies of every description, and would be in effect merely another form of Protestantism.

But, on the other hand, the exclusive view of the external authority of the Church, without a proper understanding of the nature and work of the Holy Spirit in the soul, would render the practice of religion formal, obedience servile, and the Church sterile.

The solution of the difficulty is as follows: The action of the Holy Spirit embodied visibly in the authority of the Church, and the action of the Holy Spirit dwelling invisibly in the soul, form one inseparable synthesis; and he who has not a clear conception of this twofold action of the Holy Spirit is in danger of running into one or the other, and sometimes into both, of these extremes.

either of which is destructive of the end of the Church.

The Holy Spirit, in the external authority of the Church, acts as the infallible interpreter and criterion of divine revelation. The Holy Spirit in the soul acts as the Divine Life-giver and Sanctifier. It is of the highest importance that these two distinct offices of the Holy Spirit should not be confounded.

The supposition that there can be any opposition or contradiction between the action of the Holy Spirit in the supreme decisions of the authority of the Church, and the inspirations of the Holy Spirit in the soul, can never enter the mind of an enlightened and sincere Christian. The Holy Spirit, which, through the authority of the Church, teaches divine truth, is the same Spirit which prompts the soul to receive the divine truths which He teaches. The measure of our love for the Holy Spirit is the measure of our obedience to the authority of the Church; and the measure of our obedience to the authority of the Church is the measure of our love for the Holy Spirit. Hence the sentence of St. Augustine: "*Quantum quisque amat Ecclesiam Dei, tantum habet Spiritum Sanctum.*" There is one Spirit, which acts in two different offices concurring to the same end, the regeneration and sanctification of the soul.

In case of obscurity or doubt concerning what is the divinely revealed truth, or whether what prompts the soul is or is not an inspiration of the Holy Spirit, recourse must be had to the divine teacher or criterion, the authority of the Church. For it must be borne in mind that to the Church, as represented in the first instance by St. Peter, and subsequently by his successors, was made the promise of her Divine Founder that "the gates of hell should never prevail against her." * No such promise was ever made by Christ to each individual believer. "The Church of the living God is the pillar and ground of Truth." † The test, therefore, of a truly enlightened and sincere Christian will be, in case of uncertainty, the promptitude of his obedience to the voice of the Church.

From the above plain truths the following practical rule of conduct may be drawn. The Holy Spirit is the immediate guide of the soul in the way of salvation and sanctification; and the criterion, or test, that the soul is guided by the Holy Spirit, is its ready obedience to the authority of the Church. This rule removes all danger whatever, and with it the soul can walk, run, or fly, if it chooses, in the greatest safety and with perfect liberty, in the ways of sanctity.

* St. Matth. xvi. 18. † 1 Timothy iii. 15.

## New Phase of the Church.

There are signs which indicate that the members of the Church have not only entered upon a deeper and more spiritual life, but that from the same source has arisen a new phase of their intellectual activity.

The notes of the divine institution of the Church, and the credibility of divine revelation, with her constitution and organization, having been in the main completed on the external side, the notes which now require special attention and study are those respecting her divine character, which lie on the internal side.

The mind of the Church has been turned in this direction for some time past. One has but to read the several encyclical letters of the present reigning Supreme Pontiff and of his predecessor, and the decrees of the Vatican Council, to be fully convinced of this fact.

No Pontiffs have so strenuously upheld the value and rights of human reason as Pius IX. and Leo XIII.; and no council has treated so fully of the relations of the natural with the supernatural as that of the Vatican. It must be remembered this work of both the Papacy and the Council is not yet concluded. Great mission that, to fix for ever those truths so long held in dispute, and to open

the door to the fuller knowledge of other and still greater verities!

It is the divine action of the Holy Spirit in and through the Church which gives her external organization the reason for its existence. And it is the fuller explanation of the divine side of the Church and its relations with her human side, giving always to the former its due accentuation, that will contribute to the increase of the interior life of the faithful, and aid powerfully to remove the blindness of those, whose number is much larger than is commonly supposed, who only see the Church on her human side.

The following mere suggestions, concerning the relations of the internal with the external side of the Church, are here given.

The practical aim of all true religion is to bring each individual soul under the immediate guidance of the Divine Spirit. The Divine Spirit communicates Himself to the soul by means of the sacraments of the Church. The Divine Spirit acts as the interpreter and criterion of revealed truth by the authority of the Church. The Divine Spirit acts as the principle of regeneration and sanctification in each Christian soul. The same Spirit clothes with suitable ceremonies and words the truths of religion, and the interior life of the soul, in the liturgy and devotions of the Church. The

Divine Spirit acts as the safeguard of the life of the soul and of the household of God in the discipline of the Church. The Divine Spirit established the Church as the practical and perfect means of bringing all souls under His own immediate guidance and into complete union with God. This is the realization of the aim of all true religion. Thus all religions, as far as they contain truth and viewed in the aspect of a divine life, find their common centre in the Catholic Church.

The greater part of the intellectual errors of the age arise from a lack of knowledge of the essential relations of the light of faith with the light of reason; of the connection between the mysteries and truths of divine revelation and those discovered and attainable by human reason; of the action of divine grace and the action of the human will.

The early Greek and Latin Fathers of the Church largely cultivated this field. The scholastics greatly increased the riches received from their predecessors. And had not the attention of the Church been turned aside from its course by the errors of the sixteenth century, the demonstration of Christianity on its intrinsic side would ere this have received its finishing strokes. The time has come to take up this work, continue it where it was interrupted, and bring it to completion. Thanks to the encyclicals of Pius IX. and the decisions of the

Vatican Council, and the encyclicals of Leo XIII., this task will not now be so difficult.

Many, if not most, of the distinguished apologists of Christianity, theologians, philosophers, and preachers, either by their writings or eloquence, have already entered upon this path. The recently published volumes, and those issuing day by day from the press, in exposition, or defence, or apology of Christianity, are engaged in this work.

The explanation of the internal life and constitution of the Church, and of the intelligible side of the mysteries of faith and the intrinsic reasons for the truths of divine revelation, giving to them their due emphasis, combined with the external notes of credibility, would complete the demonstration of Christianity. Such an exposition of Christianity, the union of the internal with the external notes of credibility, is calculated to produce a more enlightened and intense conviction of its divine truth in the faithful, to stimulate them to a more energetic personal action; and, what is more, it would open the door to many straying but not altogether lost children for their return to the fold of the Church.

The increased action of the Holy Spirit, with a more vigorous co-operation on the part of the faithful, which is in process of realization, will elevate the human personality to an intensity of force and grandeur productive of a new era to the Church

and to society—an era difficult for the imagination to grasp, and still more difficult to describe in words, unless we have recourse to the prophetic language of the inspired Scriptures.

Is not such a demonstration of Christianity and its results anticipated in the following words?

"We are about to see," said Schlegel, "a new exposition of Christianity, which will reunite all Christians and even bring back the infidels themselves." "This reunion between science and faith," says the Protestant historian Ranke, "will be more important in its spiritual results than was the discovery of a new hemisphere three hundred years ago, or even than that of the true system of the universe, or than any other discovery of any kind whatever."

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## Mission of Races.

Pursuing our study of the action of the Holy Spirit, we shall perceive that a deeper and more explicit exposition of the divine side of the Church, in view of the characteristic gifts of different races, is the way or means of realizing the hopes above expressed.

God is the author of the differing races of men. He, for His own good reasons, has stamped upon

them their characteristics, and appointed them from the beginning their places which they are to fill in His Church.

In a matter where there are so many tender susceptibilities, it is highly important not to overrate the peculiar gifts of any race, nor, on the other hand, to underrate them or exaggerate their vices or defects. Besides, the different races in modern Europe have been brought so closely together, and have been mingled to such an extent, that their differences can only be detected in certain broad and leading features.

It would be also a grave mistake, in speaking of the providential mission of the races, to suppose that they imposed their characteristics on religion, Christianity, or the Church; whereas, on the contrary, it is their Author who has employed in the Church their several gifts for the expression and development of those truths for which He specially created them. The Church is God acting through the different races of men for their highest development, together with their present and future greatest happiness and His own greatest glory. "God directs the nations upon the earth."*

Every leading race of men, or great nation, fills a large space in the general history of the world. It is an observation of St. Augustine that God gave

* Psalm lxvi. 5.

the empire of the world to the Romans as a reward for their civic virtues. But it is a matter of surprise how large and important a part Divine Providence has appointed special races to take in the history of religion. It is here sufficient merely to mention the Israelites.

One cannot help being struck with the mission of the Latin and Celtic races during the greater period of the history of Christianity. What brought them together in the first instance was the transference of the chair of St. Peter, the centre of the Church, to Rome, the centre of the Latin race. Rome then was the embodied expression of a perfectly organized, world-wide power. Rome was the political, and by its great roads the geographical, centre of the world.

What greatly contributed to the predominance of the Latin race, and subsequently of the Celts in union with the Latins, was the abandonment of the Church by the Greeks by schism, and the loss of the larger portion of the Saxons by the errors and revolt of the sixteenth century. The faithful in consequence were almost exclusively composed of Latin-Celts.

The absence of the Greeks and of so large a portion of the Saxons, whose tendencies and prejudices in many points are similar, left a freer course and an easier task to the Church, through her ordi-

nary channels of action, as well as through her extraordinary ones, the Councils, namely, of Trent and the Vatican, to complete her authority and her external constitution. For the Latin-Celtic races are characterized by hierarchical, traditional, and emotional tendencies.

These were the human elements which furnished the Church with the means of developing and completing her supreme authority, her divine and ecclesiastical traditions, her discipline, her devotions, and her æsthetics.

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### Some of the Causes of Protestantism.

It was precisely the importance given to the external constitution and to the accessories of the Church which excited those antipathies of the Saxons which culminated in the so-called Reformation. For the Saxon races and the mixed Saxons, the English and their descendants, predominate in the rational element, in an energetic individuality, and in great practical activity in the material order.

One of the chief defects of the Saxon mind lay in not fully understanding the constitution of the Church, or sufficiently appreciating the essential necessity of her external organization. Hence their misinterpretation of the providential action

of the Latin-Celts, and their charges against the Church of formalism, superstition, and popery. They wrongfully identified the excesses of those races with the Church of God. They failed to take into sufficient consideration the great and constant efforts the church had made, in her national and general councils, to correct the abuses and extirpate the vices which formed the staple of their complaints.

Conscious, also, of a certain feeling of repression of their natural instincts while this work of the Latin-Celts was being perfected, they at the same time felt a great aversion to the increase of externals in outward worship, and to the minute regulations in discipline, as well as to the growth of papal authority and the outward grandeur of the papal court. The Saxon leaders in the heresy of the sixteenth century, as well as those who followed them, even down to our own day, cunningly taking advantage of those antipathies and of the selfish political considerations of princes, succeeded in making a large number believe that the question in controversy was not what it really was, a question, namely, between Christianity and infidelity, but a question between Romanism and Germanism!

It is easy to foresee the result of such a false issue; for it is impossible, humanly speaking, tha

a religion can maintain itself among a people when once they are led to believe it wrongs their natural instincts, is hostile to their national development, or is unsympathetic with their genius.

With misunderstandings, weaknesses, and jealousies on both sides, these, with various other causes, led thousands and millions of Saxons and Anglo-Saxons to resistance, hatred, and finally open revolt against the authority of the Church.

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## Recent Saxon Persecutions.

The same causes which mainly produced the religious rebellion of the sixteenth century are still at work among the Saxons, and were the exciting motives of their recent persecutions of the Church.

Looking through the distorted medium of their Saxon prejudices, grown stronger with time, and freshly stimulated by the definition of papal infallibility, they have worked themselves into the belief, seeing the Church only on the outside as they do, that she is purely a human institution, grown slowly through centuries, by the controlling action of the Latin-Celtic instincts, to her present formidable proportions. The doctrines, the sacraments, the devotions, the worship, of the Catholic

Church are for the most part, from their standpoint, corruptions of Christianity, having their source in the characteristics of the Latin-Celtic races. The papal authority, to their sight, is nothing else than the concentration of the sacerdotal tendencies of these races, carried to their culminating point by the recent Vatican definition, which was due, in the main, to the efforts and the influence exerted by the Jesuits. This despotic ecclesiastical authority, which commands a superstitious reverence and servile submission to all its decrees, teaches, they affirm, doctrines inimical to the autonomy of the German Empire, and has fourteen millions or more of its subjects under its sway, ready at any moment to obey, at all hazards, its decisions. What is to hinder this ultramontane power from issuing a decree, in a critical moment, which will disturb the peace and involve, perhaps, the overthrow of that empire, the fruit of so great sacrifices and the realization of the ardent aspirations of the Germanic races? Is it not a dictate of self-preservation and political prudence to remove so dangerous an element, and that at all costs, from the state? Is it not a duty to free so many millions of our German brethren from this superstitious yoke and slavish subjection? Has not Divine Providence bestowed the empire of Europe upon the Saxons and placed us Prussians at its head

in order to accomplish, with all the means at our disposal, this great work? Is not this a duty which we owe to ourselves, to our brother Germans, and, above all, to God? This supreme effort is our divine mission!

This picture of the Catholic Church, as it appears to a large class of non-Catholic German minds, is not overdrawn. In fact, a higher coloring would give even a more exact picture of the delusion of the average German mind.

This is the monster which the too excited imagination and the deeply-rooted prejudice of the Saxon mind have created, and called by way of contempt the "Latin," the "Romish," the "Popish" Church. It is against this monster that they directed their persistent attacks, their cruel persecutions, animated with the fixed purpose of accomplishing its entire overthrow.

Is this a thing to be marvelled at, when Catholics themselves abhor and detest this caricature of the Catholic Church—for it is nothing else—more than these men do or possibly can do?

The attitude of the German Empire, and of the British Empire also until the Emancipation Act, *vis-à-vis* to the Catholic Church as they conceive her to be, may, stripped of accidental matter, be stated thus: Either adapt Latin Christianity, the Romish Church, to the German type of character

and to the exigencies of the empire, or we will employ all the forces and all the means at our disposal to stamp out Catholicity within our dominions, and to exterminate it as far as our authority and influence extend!

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## Return of the Saxon Races to the Church.

The German mind, when once it is bent upon a course, is not easily turned aside, and the present outlook for the Church in Germany is not, humanly speaking, a pleasant one to contemplate. It is an old and common saying that "Truth is mighty and will prevail." But why? "Truth is mighty" because it is calculated to convince the mind, captivate the soul, and elicit its uttermost activity and devotion. "Truth will prevail," provided it is so presented to the mind as to be seen really as it is. It is only when the truth is unknown or disfigured that the sincere repel it.

The return, therefore, of the Saxon races to the Church is to be hoped for, not by trimming divine truth, nor by altering the constitution of the Church, nor by what are called concessions. Their return is to be hoped for by so presenting the divine

truth to their minds that they can see that it is divine truth. This will open their way to the Church in harmony with their genuine instincts, and in her bosom they will find the realization of that career which their true aspirations point out for them. For the Holy Spirit, of which the Church is the organ and expression, places every soul, and therefore all nations and races, in the immediate and perfect relation with their supreme end, God, in whom they obtain their highest development, happiness, and glory, both in this life and in the life to come.

The Church, as has been shown, has already entered on this path of presenting more intimately and clearly her inward and divine side to the world, for her deepest and most active thinkers are actually engaged, more or less consciously, in this providential work.

In showing more fully the relations of the internal with the external side of the Church, keeping in view the internal as the end and aim of all, the mystic tendencies of the German mind will enable it to truly appreciate the interior life of the Church and find in it their higher satisfaction. By penetrating more deeply into the intelligible side of the mysteries of faith and the intrinsic reasons for revealed truth and the existence of the Church, the strong rational tendencies of the

Saxon mind will seize hold of and be led to apprehend the intrinsic reasons for Christianity. The Church will present herself to their minds as the practical means of establishing the complete reign of the Holy Spirit in the soul, and consequently of bringing the kingdom of heaven upon earth. This is the ideal conception of Christianity, entertained by all sincere believers in Christ among non-Catholics in Europe and the United States. This exposition, and an increased action of the Holy Spirit in the Church co-operating therewith, would complete their conviction of the divine character of the Church.

All this may seem highly speculative and of no practical bearing. But it has precisely such a bearing, if one considers in connection with it what has been going on throughout the German Empire and other parts of Germany, including Switzerland. What have we seen in all these regions? A simultaneous and persistent determination to destroy, by every species of persecution, the Catholic Church. Now, the general law of persecution is the conversion of the persecutors.

Through the cross Christ began the redemption of the world; through the cross the redemption of the world is to be continued and completed. It was mainly by the shedding of the blood of the martyrs that the Roman Empire was gained

to the faith. Their conquerors were won by the toil, heroic labors, and sufferings of saintly missionaries. The same law holds good in regard to modern persecutors. The question is not, How shall the German Empire be overthrown? or of waiting in anticipation of its destruction; or How shall the Church withstand its alarming persecutions? The great question is, How shall the blindness be removed from the eyes of the persecutors of the Church, and how can they be led to see her divine beauty, holiness, and truth, which at present are hidden from their sight? The practical question is, How shall the Church gain over the great German Empire to the cause of Christ?

O blessed persecutions! if, in addition to the divine virtues which they have brought to light by the suffering of the faithful, they serve also to lead the champions of the faith to seek for and employ such proofs and arguments as the Saxon mind cannot withstand, producing conviction in their intelligence and striking home the truth to their hearts; and in this way, instead of incurring defeat, they will pluck out of the threatening jaws of this raging German wolf the sweet fruit of victory.

This view is eminently practical, when you consider that the same law which applies to the per-

secutors of the Church applies equally to the leading or governing races. This is true from the beginning of the Church. The great apostles, St. Peter and St. Paul, did not stop in Jerusalem, but turned their eyes and steps towards all-conquering, all-powerful Rome. Their faith and their heroism, sealed with their martyrdom, after a long and bloody contest, obtained the victory. The imperial Roman eagles became proud to carry aloft the victorious cross of Christ! The Goths, the Huns, and Vandals came; the conquest was repeated; the victory, too; and they were subdued to the sweet yoke of Christ and incorporated in the bosom of His Church.

Is this rise of the Germanic empire, in our day, to be considered only as a passing occurrence, and are we to suppose that things will soon again take their former course? Or is it to be thought of as a real change in the direction of the world's affairs, under the lead of the dominant Saxon races? If the history of the human race from its cradle can be taken as a rule, the course of empire is ever northward. Be that as it may, the Saxons have actually in their hands, and are resolutely determined to keep, the ruling power in Europe, if not in the world. And the Church is a divine queen, and her aim has always been to win to her bosom the imperial races. She has never failed to do it, too!

Think you these people are for the most part actuated by mere malice, and have persecuted the Church with knowledge of what they are doing? The question is not of their prominent leaders and the actual apostates. There may be future prodigal sons even amongst these. Does not the Church suffer from their hands in a great measure what her Divine Founder suffered when He was nailed to the cross, and cried, "Father, forgive them; they know not what they do."

The persecutors in the present generation are not to be judged as those who were born in the Church, and who, knowing her divine character, by an unaccountable defection turned their backs upon her. Will their stumbling prove a fatal fall to all their descendants? God forbid! Their loss for a time has proved a gain to the Church, and their return will bring spiritual riches to both, and through them to the whole world, "for God is able to engraft them again." *

The Catholic Church unveils to the penetrating intelligence of the Saxon races her divine internal life and beauty; to their energetic individuality she proposes its elevation to a divine manhood; and to their great practical activity she opens the door to its employment in spreading the divine faith over the whole world!

* St. Paul's Epistle to the Romans, xi. 23.

That which will hasten greatly the return of the Saxons to the Church is the progressive action of the controlling and dissolving elements of Protestantism towards the entire negation of all religion. For the errors contained in every heresy, and which time never fails to intensify, involve its certain extinction. Many born in those errors, clearly foreseeing these results, have already returned to the fold of the Church. This movement will be accelerated by the more rapid dissolution of Protestantism, consequent on its being placed recently under similar hostile legislation in Switzerland and Germany with the Catholic Church. "The blows struck at the Church of Rome," such is the acknowledgment of one of its own organs, "tell with redoubled force against the Evangelical Church."

With an intelligent positive movement on the part of the Church, and by the actual progressive negative one operating in Protestantism, that painful wound inflicted in the sixteenth century on Christianity will be soon, let us hope, closed up and healed, never again to be re-opened.

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### Mixed Saxons Returning.

Christ blamed the Jews who were skilful in detecting the signs of change in the weather for

their want of skill in discerning the signs of the times. There are evidences, and where we should first expect to meet them—namely, among the mixed Saxon races, the people of England and the United States—of this return to the true Church.

The mixture of the Anglo-Saxons with the blood of the Celts in former days caused them to retain, at the time of the so-called Reformation, more of the doctrines, worship, and organization of the Catholic Church than did the thorough Saxons of Germany. It is for the same reason that among them are manifested the first unmistakable symptoms of their entrance once more into the bosom of the Church.

At different epochs movements in this direction have taken place, but never so serious and general as at the present time. The character and the number of the converts from Anglicanism to the Catholic Church gave, in the beginning, a great alarm to the English nation. But now it has become reconciled to the movement, which continues and takes its course among the more intelligent and influential classes, and that notwithstanding the spasmodic cries of alarm and the spiteful attacks of the Church's enemies.

It is clear to those who have eyes to see such things that God is bestowing special graces upon

the English people in our day, and that the hope is not without solid foundation which looks forward to the time when England shall again take rank among the Catholic nations.

The evidences of a movement towards the Catholic Church are still clearer and more general in the United States. There are less prejudice and hostility against the Church in the United States than in England, and hence her progress is much greater.

The Catholics, in the beginning of this century, stood as one to every two hundred of the whole population of the American Republic. The ratio of Catholics now is one to six or seven of the inhabitants. The Catholics will outnumber, before the close of this century, all other believers in Christianity put together in the republic.

This is no fanciful statement, but one based on a careful study of statistics, and the estimate is moderate. Even should emigration from Catholic countries to the United States cease altogether, which it will not, or even should it greatly diminish, the supposed loss or diminution in this source of augmentation will be fully compensated by the relative increase of births among the Catholics as compared with that among other portions of the population.

The spirit, the tendencies, and the form of po-

litical government inherited by the people of the United States are strongly and distinctively Saxon; yet there are no more patriotic or better citizens in the republic than the Roman Catholics, and no more intelligent, practical, and devoted Catholics in the Church than the seven millions of Catholics in this same young and vigorous republic. The Catholic faith is the only persistently progressive religious element, compared with the increase of population, in the United States. A striking proof that the Catholic Church flourishes wherever there is honest freedom and wherever human nature has its full share of liberty! Give the Catholic Church equal rights and fair play, and she will again win Europe, and with Europe the world.

Now, who will venture to assert that these two mixed Saxon nations, of England and the United States, are not, in the order of Divine Providence, the appointed leaders of the great movement of the return of all the Saxons to the Holy Catholic Church?

The sun, in his early dawn, first touches the highest mountain-tops, and, advancing in his course, floods the deepest valleys with his glorious light; and so the Sun of divine grace has begun to enlighten the minds in the highest stations in life in England, in the United States, and in Germany;

and what human power will impede the extension of its holy light to the souls of the whole population of these countries?

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### Transition of the Latin-Celts.

Strange action of Divine Providence in ruling the nations of this earth! While the Saxons are about to pass from a natural to a supernatural career, the Latin-Celts are impatient for, and have already entered upon, a natural one. What does this mean? Are these races to change their relative positions before the face of the world?

The present movement of transition began on the part of the Latin-Celtic nations in the last century among the French people, who of all these nations stand geographically the nearest to, and whose blood is most mingled with that of, the Saxons. That transition began in violence, because it was provoked to a premature birth by the circumstance that the control exercised by the Church as the natural moderator of the Christian republic of Europe was set aside by Protestantism; particularly so in France, in consequence of a diluted dose of the same Protestantism under the name of Gallicanism. Exempt

from this salutary control, kings and the aristocracy oppressed the people at their own will and pleasure; and the people, in turn, wildly rose up in their might, and cut off, at their own will and pleasure, the heads of the kings and aristocrats. Louis XIV., in his pride, said: "L'État c'est moi!" The people replied, in their passion: "L'État c'est nous!"

Under the guidance of the Church, the transformation from feudalism to all that is included under the title of modern citizenship was effected with order, peace, and benefit to all classes concerned. Apart from this aid, society pendulates from despotism to anarchy, and from anarchy to despotism. The French people at the present moment are groping about and earnestly seeking after the true path of progress, which they lost some time back by their departure from the Christian order of society.

The true movement of Christian progress was turned aside into destructive channels; and this movement, becoming revolutionary, has passed in our day to the Italian and Spanish nations.

Looking at things in their broad features, Christianity has been apparently exposed to the danger, on the one hand, of being exterminated by the persecutions of the Saxon races, and, on the other, of being denied by the apostasy of the

Latin-Celts. This is the great tribulation of the present hour of the Church. She feels the painful struggle. The destructive work of crushing out Christianity by means of these hostile tendencies has already begun. If, as some imagine, the Christian faith be only possible at the sacrifice of human nature, and if a natural career be only possible at the sacrifice of the Christian faith, it requires no prophetic eye to foresee the sad results to the Christian religion at no distant future.

But it is not so. The principles already laid down and proclaimed to the world by the Church answer satisfactorily these difficulties. What the age demands, what society is seeking for, rightly interpreted, is the knowledge of these principles and their practical application to its present needs.

For God is no less the author of nature than of grace, of reason than of faith, of this earth than of heaven.

The Word by which all things were made that were made, and the Word which was made flesh, is one and the same Word. The light which enlighteneth every man that cometh into this world, and the light of Christian faith, are, although differing in degree, the same light. "There is therefore nothing so foolish or so absurd," to use the

words of Pius IX. on the same subject, "as to suppose there can be any opposition between them." * Their connection is intimate, their relation is primary, they are, in essence, one. For what else did Christ become man than to establish the kingdom of God on earth as the way to the kingdom of God in heaven?

It cannot be too often repeated to the men of this generation, so many of whom are trying to banish and forget God, that God, and God alone, is the Creator and Renewer of the world. The same God who made all things, and who became man, and began the work of regeneration, is the same who really acts in the Church now upon men and society, and who has pledged His word to continue to do so until the end of the world. To be guided by God's Church is to be guided by God. It is in vain to look elsewhere. "Society," as the late Pontiff has observed, "has been enclosed in a labyrinth, out of which it will never issue save by the hand of God." † The hand of God is the Church. It is this hand He is extending, in a more distinctive and attractive form, to this present generation. Blessed generation, if it can only be led to see this outstretched hand, and to follow the path of all true progress, which it so clearly points out!

* "Encyclical to the German Bishops," 1854.
† January 24, 1872.

## Perspective of the Future.

During the last three centuries, from the nature of the work the Church had to do, the weight of her influence had to be mainly exerted on the side of restraining human activity. Her present and future influence, due to the completion of her external organization, will be exerted on the side of soliciting increased action. The first was necessarily repressive and unpopular; the second will be, on the contrary, expansive and popular. The one excited antagonism, the other will attract sympathy and cheerful co-operation. The former restraint was exercised, not against human activity, but against the exaggeration of that activity. The future will be the solicitation of the same activity towards its elevation and divine expansion, enhancing its fruitfulness and glory.

These different races of Europe and the United States, constituting the body of the most civilized nations of the world, united in an intelligent appreciation of the divine character of the Church, with their varied capacities and the great agencies at their disposal, would be the providential means of rapidly spreading the light of faith over the whole world, and of constituting a more Christian state of society.

In this way would be reached a more perfect

realization of the prediction of the prophets, of the promises and prayers of Christ, and of the true aspirations of all noble souls.

This is what the age is calling for, if rightly understood, in its countless theories and projects of reform.

II.

# RELATION OF CHURCH AND STATE IN AMERICA.

WHAT relation does Catholicity hold to the discovery of America and the settlement of this country? The discovery of the Western continent was eminently a religious enterprise. Columbus had in vain sought aid for his great undertaking from his native city, Genoa; from Portugal, England, Venice, and the court of Spain; and it was after these fruitless applications that Juan Perez, the prior of La Rabida, took up his cause and pleaded it with so much earnestness and ability in a letter to Queen Isabella that she at once sent for Columbus and offered to pledge her jewels to obtain funds for the expedition. The motive which animated Columbus, in common with the Franciscan prior and Isabella the Catholic, was the burning desire to carry the blessings of the Christian faith to the inhabitants of a new continent, and it

was the inspiration of this idea which brought a new world to light.

This inspiration has never died out; if the Spanish and French missionaries did not accompany the first discoverers, they followed speedily in their tracks, and the work of the conversion of the aborigines was earnestly begun. In a short time they traversed the whole northern continent from the mouth of the St. Lawrence to California, and from the Gulf of Mexico to Hudson's Bay. Sometimes missionaries were slain, but the fearless soldiers of the cross continued unceasingly their work of converting the natives and bringing them into the fold of Christ. The pages of history which narrate the self-sacrificing labors of the missionaries to the Indians are among the brightest in the annals of the Church.

The raising of the red men to the height of the Christian faith was but one of the fruits of the discovery of the new continent; another was to offer an asylum to all who in other lands were persecuted and oppressed on account of their religious convictions. Among the first to seek this relief from oppression on the virgin soil of the New World were the English Catholic colonists under Lord Baltimore. To their honor it is to be said that, both by the original design of the proprietary, Lord Baltimore, and by the legislative enactments of the

freemen of the province, there reigned, while their rule lasted in Maryland, a perfect equality among all Christian denominations, and to all were secured the same rights and privileges, civil and religious. This act on the part of the colonists of Maryland was in harmony with the dictates of right reason and the authentic teachings of faith; for all attempts to bring by coercion men who differ in their religious convictions to uniformity in the profession of religious belief, if successful, would logically put an end to all rational religion. Compulsion never gave birth to faith, which is "not by any means a blind assent of the mind,"* but essentially an intelligent and voluntary act. Convinced of this, as Catholics, the idea of religious tolerance flowed naturally and consistently in the minds of the first settlers on the shores of the Potomac. It was a noble act on their part to proclaim that within the province and jurisdiction of Maryland no Christian man should be molested in worshipping God according to the dictates of his conscience, and whoever supposes that the Syllabus teaches anything to the contrary seriously mistakes its meaning. Honor, then, to the pilgrim fathers of St. Mary! who, when the other settlements had a state-supported church and were intolerant of all others, asked for themselves no fa-

* Vatican Council, De Fide, ch. iii.

vor, but offered equal rights to all; thus excluding the secular authority of the state from interfering in matters of religion—a principle for which the popes, in their struggles with the secular powers for the rights of the Church, have always contended, and for which they still have to contend. Let, then, those Catholic Anglo-Americans have their due share of praise for the religious toleration of which they were the first to give an example—an example, furthermore, which had a formative influence in shaping the republic and its free institutions. For the principle of the incompetency of the state to enact laws controlling matters purely religious is the keystone of the arch of American liberties, and Catholics of all climes can point to it with special delight.

The connection between the republic and the Catholic Church, if satisfactorily treated, requires that the fundamental principles of the republic should be clearly stated, and their relation with Protestantism first be disposed of. This is what we now attempt.

The republic of the United States is the result of the gathered political wisdom and experience of past ages, shaped by a recognition of man's natural rights and a trust in his innate capacity for self-government beyond what had found expression in the prevailing political systems of Eu-

rope. The fundamental articles of the American political creed and the formative principles of the republic are embodied in the Declaration of Independence, whence they passed gradually into the constitutions of the several States and into the Constitution of the United States, and have step by step worked their way more or less perfectly into the general and special laws of the country. These articles consist principally in the declaration "that all men are created equal; that they are endowed by their Creator with certain inalienable rights; that among these are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness; that to secure these rights governments are instituted among men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed."

These declarations can be looked upon only by superficial thinkers as "glittering generalities," for some of them are divine and fundamental truths, and all are practical verities, having a ground both in reason and revelation. They are divine, inasmuch as they declare the rights of the Creator in His creature; they are fundamental, for without the enjoyment of the natural rights which they proclaim man is not a man, but a slave or a chattel; they are practical, for man is, or ought to be, under his Creator, the master of his own destiny and free from any dominion not founded in divine

right. The Creator invested man with these rights in order that he might fulfil the duties inseparably attached to them. For these rights put man in the possession of himself, and leave him free to reach the end for which his Creator called him into existence. He, therefore, who denies or violates these rights offends God, acts the tyrant, and is an enemy of mankind. And if there be any superior merit in the republican polity of the United States, it consists chiefly in this: that while it adds nothing and can add nothing to man's natural rights, it expresses them more clearly, guards them more securely, and protects them more effectually; so that man, under its popular institutions, enjoys greater liberty in working out his true destiny.

Since Christianity claims to be God's revelation of the great end for which He created man, it follows that those rights without which he cannot reach that end must find their sanction, expressed or implied, in all true interpretations of its doctrines.

That the interpretations of Christianity by the so-called Reformation, especially by its leaders, neither sanctioned nor even implied the natural rights of man, the peculiar articles of its creed and its history plainly show.

When the Puritan Fathers landed on Plymouth

Rock they brought with them a fixed religious creed, whose primary article was "the total depravity" of human nature, and, as a consequence, the loss of free-will; from which premise it was held that man, in his unregenerate state, is not able to do any good, but is inclined to all evil. This fundamental dogma, when applied to the political order, excludes unregenerate men from all part in the organization of the state, as well as from all participation in the rights and privileges of citizenship. Such, too, is the historical fact; political citizenship in Puritan America, where they trimmed the state to suit their creed, was exclusively granted to members of the orthodox church. "All civil power," says the Presbyterian Dr. Hodge, "was confined to the members of the Church, no person being either eligible to office or entitled to the right of suffrage who was not in full communion of some church." * The natural man had no rights. To be a freeman you must be a Puritan. The men who came in the *Mayflower* did not hold the principles which gave birth to religious toleration or political liberty in the New World. And so far were their traditions from the "grand historic lines of the country" that it was as late as 1834 that Massachusetts first granted full religious liberty, while up to a very

* *Princeton Review*, 1863.

recent date a Catholic was ineligible to office in the State of New Hampshire because of his religion. Hence there can scarcely be an assertion farther from the truth than that made by Ranke and D'Aubigné, and repeated by Bancroft and others of more or less note, that republican liberty is due to Protestantism, and due to Protestantism under its most repulsive form—that which was given to it by John Calvin.

An appeal to the New World, where the original Protestant colonies were free to form a political government in accordance with their peculiar religious belief, gives no countenance to this peremptory assertion. It is, moreover, made in face of the historic testimony of the Old World, for nowhere in Europe has Protestantism been favorable to popular rights, or called into existence what by any honest interpretation can be termed a republic. This statement can be easily verified.

During its three centuries of existence a republican form of government has nowhere under Protestant ascendency made its appearance. One will look in vain in Germany, the cradle of Protestantism, for a popular government. The same is true of Prussia, England, Scotland, Sweden, and Holland, for the Dutch Republic was founded upon the ancient constitutions of the provinces. M

Guizot, in his *Life of John Calvin*, rightly discriminates between the influence of Calvinism on churches and the influence of Calvinism on liberty when he says: "Calvin's *Institutes* were the source of the strength and vitality of the Reformed churches in these countries," but at the same time he acknowledges that "their claims were incompatible with the progress of liberty" (Guizot's *Life of John Calvin*, ch. v.) "Calvin did not believe in man's free-will," says the same author, "and he treated it with severity and a kind of contempt. Calvin believed and asserted that he had more right over other men's opinions and actions than he ought to have claimed, and he did not show sufficient respect for their rights" (*ibid.*) He knows little of the origin of liberty in America or elsewhere who honors in any sense John Calvin as its author.

If Protestants have contributed to human freedom, it was not as Protestants; the motives which prompted them did not spring from their religious creed, for that was a foe to human rights and the grave of liberty. The servitude of the human will in consequence of original sin, as taught by both Martin Luther and John Calvin, cut off, root and branch, personal, political, civil, intellectual, moral, and religious liberty. Protestantism as a religious system was an insult to all ideas of freedom.

Hence it was not due to any principle of liberty of the original Protestant colonists that religious toleration was made a part of the organic law of the republic, but chiefly to the fact that the Protestant sects were not able to agree, and that there was no one of them sufficiently powerful to press its exclusive claim and get its peculiarities incorporated into the Constitution.

In no place where Protestantism prevailed among a people as their religion has it given birth to a republic, and nowhere in the nineteenth century does there exist a republic in a Protestant land. The so-called Reformation, following out its own principles, failed altogether to reconcile Christianity with popular rights. Its spirit and doctrines, derived from an exaggerated idea of the sovereignty of God and the utter nullity of man, are in accordance with the Oriental mind and suitable to an Asiatic despotism, and it deserves credit for civil and religious liberty nowhere. As for the Puritans in particular, one of their descendants covers the whole ground when he says: "I believe we are descended from the Puritans, who nobly fled from a land of despotism to a land of freedom, where they could not only enjoy their own religion but prevent everybody else from enjoying his."

Protestantism in its political aspect might be

defined as a theocratic corporation composed exclusively of regenerate men of orthodox faith, having for its premise the religious dogma concerning the "total corruption of human nature" in consequence of Adam's fall, as taught by its leaders, Martin Luther and John Calvin. One may repel this conclusion, but it will be at the expense of intellectual consistency and historical testimony.

So long as the New England settlements were content to remain English colonies it was possible for them to hold their peculiar religious tenets and maintain their exclusive religio-political organization; but when they joined with the other colonies, and appealed to the equality by creation of all men and the inalienable rights of man to justify their separation from Great Britain, the Puritans then and there, in sanctioning these declarations, entered upon a road which necessarily terminated in a radical and total change of the peculiar articles of their religious creed. For the proclamation of man's natural rights involved the overthrow of the whole theological structure built by the reform theologians upon the corner-stone of man's "total depravity." The Puritans, in signing the Declaration of Independence, signed their own death-warrant.

A comparison between the two will show this.

The political system of the Puritans was founded on an exaggerated supernaturalism; the political system implied in the truths contained in the Declaration of Independence supposed a mere naturalism. The former held human nature to be totally corrupt; the latter supposes human nature to be essentially good. The one maintained that man, by Adam's fall, forfeited all his natural rights; the other declared that the rights of man by nature are inalienable. The first granted political suffrage exclusively to the elect; the second based the right of suffrage on universal manhood. The Puritans relied altogether on the strength of divine grace; the American republicans trusted in the inborn capacity of human nature. The two parties started from opposite poles in regard to man's rights and the value of human nature. The Declaration of Independence was the antithesis of Martin Luther's work on the *Slave-will* and John Calvin's *Institutes*.

That Calvinism excludes republicanism in politics has been shown; and that republicanism excludes Calvinism in religion we will now endeavor to prove.

The process of this exclusion was a simple one. The natural influence of the practical working of the American political system, based on universal suffrage, is an incitement to the intelligence and

conscience of the people under the conviction that the choice of the ballot-box will be in the main on the side of good government. Frequent elections and the popular agitations attending them awaken aspirations, excite debate and action, and under this stimulating influence the people are soon led to trust human reason and to become conscious of the possession of free-will; and it was quite natural that, as these repressed powers grew in strength by action, their leaders should assert, and rather defiantly at first, the rights of man, should be forward as champions of human liberty, and indulge in some pretty "tall talk" about the dignity of man and the nobility of human nature. Nor can it be a matter of surprise that rousing appeals were made to men who, under the depressing influence of a religious creed, would have lost their manhood, if that were possible: "to act out your self," "obey your instincts," "assert your manhood," "be a man"! The extravagant efforts to magnify man were the natural rebound from the opposite extreme of excessive abasement.

Universal suffrage is the most efficient school to awaken general intelligence, to teach a people their rights, and to rouse in their bosoms the sense of their manhood. For what is a vote? It is the recognition of man's intelligence and

liberty and responsibility, the qualities which constitute his manhood. It is the admission that man, as man, is, and ought to be considered, a factor in political society; that he has the right to shape, and in bounden duty ought to shape so far as his ability extends, the course of the destiny of his country. A vote is a practical means by which every man can exercise his right and fulfil his duty by making his voice heard in the councils of the nation. It is the practical application of the truth that "all men are born equal"—that is, "all men have an equal right to life," to "liberty," and to the "pursuit of happiness," and, armed with a ballot, a man has the power of maintaining and protecting these rights. Every vote rightly understood means at least all that has been here stated. The force of these truths, by virtue of their application, effaced from the minds of the offspring of the Puritans in less than two generations the "injurious impositions of their early catechetical instructions." It is speaking within the bounds of moderation to say that scarcely one descendant of the Puritans in fifty, perhaps not one in five hundred—shall we say one in a thousand? perhaps not one in ten thousand—will be found who would willingly make, without serious reservations, an act of faith in the five points of

Calvinism. So thorough has been this reaction that a good part of the New England people now hold that to be Christianity which their forefathers would have condemned as the total negation of Christianity. This is not to be wondered at when you consider that every time a freeman goes to the polls and deposits his vote in the ballot-box he virtually condemns the dogmas of Protestantism and practically repudiates the Reformation. The persistent action of the ballot-box of the republic outweighed the persuasive force of the Puritan pulpit.

A writer in an English periodical, commenting on this religious phase of the New England mind resulting from their rejection of the doctrine of "total depravity," remarks: "It is now a part of the Boston creed that a man born in that city has no need to be born again."

The people may not draw promptly the conclusions which flow from their premises, for they often act rather from implicit than explicit convictions; but in the long run they reach the explicit logical conclusion from their premises. The early Puritans, in conforming their politics to their religion, founded a theocracy; their descendants, in conforming their religion to their political principles, founded Unitarianism. "I trust," wrote Mr. Jefferson in 1822, "there is not a

young man now born in the United States who will not die an Unitarian." *

This truth, then, if we mistake not, has been clearly shown: that every religious dogma has a special bearing on political society, and this bearing is what constitutes its political principle; and every political principle has a religious bearing, and this bearing involves a religious dogma which is its premise. And, as a corollary from the above, it may be rightly said that Protestant religious dogmas are foreign to republicanism and lead to a theocracy in politics; and that republicanism in politics is foreign to Protestantism and leads to Unitarianism in religion. But Unitarianism is naturalism, and no close observer of the current of religious thought of the American people will deny that the genius of republicanism is bearing non-Catholic Americans away to naturalism in religion.

This much being said, the way is now clear to treat more satisfactorily of the relation between the republic and the Catholic Church.

There exists a necessary bond and correlation between the truths contained in the Declaration of Independence and the revealed truths of Christianity, since the truths of the natural order serve as indispensable supports to the body of

* Parton's *Life of Jefferson*, p. 711.

revealed truths of faith. Deny to man reason, and religion can have to him no more meaning than to a brute or a machine. Deny the certitude of reason, and there is no foundation for certitude in supernatural faith. Deny the innate freedom of the will, and the basis for all morality is undermined, and the fountain-head of personal, political, and religious liberty dried up. Deny to man the gifts of reason and free-will, and the natural rights of man which flow from these gifts are the wild fancies of a dreamer, and a republic founded upon them becomes the baseless fabric of a vision.

The following principles will throw more light on the value of human nature, and of the bearing of the truths of reason upon the supernatural truths of faith, and make our road still easier. Reason is the organ of truth, and acts upon the truth which lies within its domain with infallible certitude. The action of reason implicitly or explicitly precedes faith; reason can admit the claims of no authority which does not appeal with entire trust to its jurisdiction for verification; it can accept none that does not accord and blend with its dictates. Man is by nature in possession of his free-will; therefore freedom is a birthright, and he holds it in trust from his Creator and is responsible for its

right use. Human nature, as it now exists, is essentially good, and man naturally seeks and desires his Creator as the source of his happiness. Man has lost none of his original faculties and has forfeited none of his natural rights by Adam's fall, and therefore is by nature in possession of his natural rights, and it is rightly said: "Among these are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness." "God has created all men equal" in regard to these rights, and therefore no one man has the natural right to govern another man; and all political authority in individuals is justly said to be derived, under God, from the consent of the collective people who are governed. The people, under God, associated in a body politic, are the source of the sovereign political power in the civil state. The light of reason is the light of God in the soul, and the natural rights of man are conferred by God directly upon man; and therefore a religion which does not affirm the value of human reason and defend the natural rights of man is baseless, and by no manner of means revealed by his Creator, but is a delusion or an imposition and worthy of no respect. With the light of these statements, which are in conformity with her authoritative teaching, the connection of the Catholic Church with the American republic can easily be

understood; the light which they shed lays bare to the view of all men the real motives which actuate Catholics in their devotion to popular rights, and places above all suspicion the sincerity of their love for popular institutions.

The American people in the Declaration of Independence avowed unequivocally their belief in the value of human nature, made a solemn act of loyalty to human reason, grounded their popular government on a solid foundation, and opened the door which leads directly to the truth. The truths asserted were not the fruits of philosophical speculations, but evident truths of human reason; and the rights affirmed were not the declamations of political dreamers, but rights inseparable from man's rational nature. Nor were these truths and these rights proclaimed to the world for the first time on the 4th of July, 1776, by the Continental Congress of the colonies; for they are as old as human nature, and will be found among the traditions of all races of civilized men. They are not lifeless abstractions but living truths, concreted more or less in all political governments, in their institutions and laws. Freedom is no tender sapling, but a hardy tree and of slow growth, whose roots are grounded in and entwined around the very elements of human nature, and under the shelter of its stout

branches man has reached, through many struggles, his existing state of manhood.

The War of Independence was a struggle for man's sacred rights and liberties, and in support of these rights and liberties the colonists, as British subjects, cited the Magna Charta outlined by Cardinal Langton and his compeers, and won by them from King John in the meadow of Runnymede. Upon these inherent and acknowledged rights of man, and upon the conclusion derived from them that no taxation without representation ought to be permitted, the founders of the American state based their claims. To maintain these rights, which they had received as a legacy from our common Catholic ancestors, the war for independence began, was fought, was won; upon them the republic was erected, and stands unchanged and immovable. Had the far-seeing Count de Maistre been as well acquainted with the history of the American colonies as he was with the history of his own country or that of England, he would not have hazarded the statement, advanced in his *Considerations on France*, that "he did not believe that the United States would last" or that "the city of Washington would accomplish the object for which it was projected." All the conditions which he considered as essential to form a nation, and the

vital principles necessary to produce a constitution, were existing and gave birth to the republic. The republic came forth from these into existence as naturally as the flower expands from the bud. The illustrious count's distrust of our political principles was in contradiction to his own political doctrines no less than to the truths of his Catholic faith. He whose intellectual vision is open to the light of first principles and their main bearings, and is not altogether a stranger to true history, knows full well that the Catholic Church has battled her whole lifetime for those rights of man and that liberty which confer the greatest glory on the American republic.

That the pages of history testify to the close relationship existing between popular governments and the Catholic faith is shown by the fact that all republics since the Christian era have sprung into existence under the influence of the Catholic Church, were founded in the ages of faith and by a Catholic people. The republic of San Marino has existed in an entirely Catholic population in the heart of Italy one thousand years or more; and that of Andorra, on the borders of Spain and France, has stood the same number of years. But these republics are small in numbers and in extent of territory? Grant it; yet they are large

enough and have existed long enough to illustrate the principle that republicanism is congenial with the Catholic religion and at home in a Catholic population. Then, again, we have the Italian republics in Catholic ages—those of Venice, Pisa, Genoa, Milan, Florence, Padua, Bologna. In fact, there were no less than two hundred republics spread over the fair land of Italy. The principal Italian cities may be regarded as model republics. Some were founded in the ninth, others in the tenth or eleventh, century, and lasted several hundred years. Venice stood one thousand years and more. The Swiss republic was founded in mediæval times, and counts among its heroes and martyrs of political liberty William Tell and Arnold von Winkelried, both of whom were faithful sons of the Catholic Church. The republics in South America, though rather quarrelsome, are at least the growth of a population altogether Catholic. How can we explain that the love of liberty and popular institutions should thus spring up spontaneously and exclusively on Catholic soil, unless it be that republicanism and Catholicity have one common root?

From this point of view it is a matter of no surprise that Catholics were the first to proclaim religious freedom among the original colonists,

and were also among the first and stanchest patriots in the war for independence. None will be found among the signers of the Declaration of Independence whose position in society and wealth were equal to those of Charles Carroll, the intelligent, sincere, and fervent Catholic layman. The priest who became the first bishop and first archbishop in the hierarchy of the Catholic Church in the United States was the intimate friend of Benjamin Franklin, and, an associate with him, invited by Congress to engage the Canadians to be neutral if they were not ready to join their efforts for independence. Washington, with his characteristic impartiality, publicly acknowledged at the close of the war the patriotic part which Catholics as a class had taken in the great struggle for liberty. No one can appreciate the depth of conviction and the strength of affection of Catholics for republican institutions unless he sees, as they do, the same order of truths which serve as the foundation of his religious belief underlying the free institutions of his country. The doctrines of the Catholic Church alone give to popular rights, and governments founded thereupon, an intellectual basis, and furnish their vital principle. What a Catholic believes as a member of the Catholic Church he believes as a citizen of the republic. His religion consecrates his political

convictions, and this consecration imparts a two-fold strength to his patriotism.

What a Catholic believes as a citizen of the republic he believes as a member of the Catholic Church; and as the natural supports and strengthens the supernatural, this accounts for the universally acknowledged fact that no Catholics are more sincere in their religious belief, more loyal to the authority of the Church, more generous in her support, than the Catholic republican citizens of the United States. Catholicity in religion sanctions republicanism in politics, and republicanism in politics favors Catholicity in religion.

Their relationship is so intimate and vital that no attack can be made against the Church which is not equally a blow against the republic. The animus of the so-called Native-American party was hostility to the Catholic Church, and its principles were in direct contradiction to the American bill of rights, and its policy was a flagrant violation of that religious, civil, and political liberty guaranteed by the Constitution of the United States.

The question of education affords another illustration. Catholics favor education, none more than they, and they take the strongest grounds against ignorance, for they look upon ignorance, when voluntary, as being frequently something worse

than a misfortune; they even condemn it in many cases as a sin. They are prepared, if their rights be respected, to give their children all the elementary, scientific, and moral education of which they are capable, and even more than the state will ever ask. As an evidence of their spirit and devotion to education witness their schools, academies, and colleges dotted all over the land. No denomination of Christians, no class of American citizens, can stand alongside of Catholics when it is a question of earnestness and self-sacrifice for education. But "No," say the votaries of the common-school system to Catholics; "we insist that you shall educate your children according to our specially-devised state system; and, what is more, you shall be taxed by the state for its support."

Catholics say in reply that it is no necessary part of the function of the state to teach and educate children. The education of children is rather a parental than a political duty. Besides, to ascribe this function to the state to the exclusion of the parent is anti-American; for the genius of our political system dictates that the state should abstain from all interference in matters which can be as well accomplished by individual enterprise or voluntary associations. It is clear that the chief aim of the advocates of the present

public-school system in the United States is less the desire for general diffusion of knowledge than the advancement of a pet theory of education; and many of them insist upon its exclusive adoption because they imagine that its spirit and tendency are against the spread and progress of the Catholic faith. They are blind to the fact that it is equally destructive to every form of the Christian faith; that it leaves, because of its practical inefficiency, thousands of children in ignorance; that it does violence to the religious convictions of a large body of citizens of the republic; that it tramples upon the sacred rights of parents, and endangers the state itself by perverting its action from its legitimate function. "Heat not a furnace so hot that it doth singe yourself" is good advice. The so-called American public-school system is a cunningly-devised scheme, under the show of zeal for popular education, to force the state, in violation of American principles of liberty, to impose an unjust and heavy tax on its citizens, with the intent of injuring the Catholic Church, while in the meantime it is sapping in the minds of the American youth the foundations of all religion and driving them into infidelity.

There are other questions, agitated only by an inconsiderable portion of the American people, and equally foreign to the genius and normal

action of the republic. Some would change the Constitution of the United States, and, under the plea of Christianizing it, make it sectarian; while others, under the garb of liberty, would make the state at least pagan, if not atheistic. Had these partisans their way, the one would make the Church the state, and the other would make the state the Church. Catholics are content with the organic law of the republic as it stands, because it is as it ought to be. They say to both leagues, "Protestant" and "Liberal": "Hands off from the palladium of American rights and freedom! Let there be an open field; there is no ground for fear that truth will be worsted in a fair encounter." "Truth," in the inspired words of Holy Writ, "is mighty above all things, and will prevail."

Let it, then, be clearly understood that what we maintain is that the common aim of all legitimate political government is the security of man's natural rights; that the American republic is most distinctly founded on this common basis; that the Catholic interpretation of Christianity emphatically sanctions its declaration of these rights, and as the natural and supernatural spring from one and the same divine source, "and God cannot deny Himself, nor one truth ever contradict another," * it follows that the republic and

* Vatican Council, De fide et ratione,

the Catholic Church can never in their normal action, if intelligence reigns, clash, but, by a necessary law of their existence, mutually aid, advance, and complete each other. A citizen of the American republic who understands himself is all the more loyal to the republic because he is a Catholic, and all the better Catholic because he is loyal to the republic. For the doctrines of the Catholic Church alone furnish him with the principles which enable him to make a synthesis between republicanism and Christianity.

As to the financial state of the Church in the republic, her strength is in relying for her material support upon the piety of the faithful, and the spirit and generosity with which all classes of her children respond to this test of the sincerity of their faith is an example which has a meaning at this moment for the whole Christian world.

Socially and politically Catholics are slowly taking the rank to which their education, virtue, wealth, and numbers entitle them among the prominent forces of the republic, and the light which their religion throws upon its vital principles and its Constitution will make them conspicuous as intelligent and patriotic citizens.

The future of the United States belongs, under God, to that religion which, by its conscious possession of truth and by the indwelling Spirit of

divine love, shall succeed in bringing the American people to unity in their religious belief and action, as they are actually one in the political sense. It would be the utter despair of reason to suppose that truth cannot be known with certitude, and it is the virtual denial of God to question His readiness to fill the hearts of all men with His love. The thought that the existing wranglings in religion are to go on and increase for ever can only enter base minds and satisfy vulgar souls.

But admitting all that has been said to be true, it may be urged that the faith of the greater part of Catholics who come here from abroad rests on a traditional and historical basis almost exclusively; and conceding that this traditional faith will be firm enough to keep its hold upon the immigrants and retain them in the fold of the Church until death, the question starts up forcibly here: Will not the Catholic faith continue on a traditional basis and, under the influence of republicanism, lose its hold, in one or two, or at most in three generations, on the immigrants' children?

It is too obvious to admit of denial that a people born and educated under the influence of popular institutions will tend to exalt reason, and emphasize the positive instincts of human nature,

and be apt to look upon the intrinsic reason of things as the only criterion of truth. It is equally clear that the Catholic Church, if she is to keep within her fold those who have received her baptism, and to captivate an intelligent and energetic people like the Americans, will have to receive their challenge and be ready to answer satisfactorily the problems of reason; meet fully the demands of their spiritual nature; bless and sanctify the imagination and senses and all man's God-given instincts. And while answering the most energetic and sublime intelligence of the man at the bar of reason, she will have to know how to retain her sweet and gentle hold on the tenderest affections of the child.

This task will not be an arduous one; for, as has been shown, the authoritative teachings of the Catholic Church maintain the natural order as the basis of the supernatural. In the minds of many Catholicity is still identified with a Christianity whose type was Calvinism. Hence they do themselves the injustice to believe that in rejecting Calvinism they have also rejected Christianity altogether. But they can easily be made aware that the truths on which they based their rejection of Calvinism are affirmed by Catholicity. What they did in their repudiation of Calvinism —and Calvinism is nothing else but the logical

basis of Protestantism—was only a repetition of the anathemas of the fathers of the Council of Trent, and their action at bottom was founded mainly on the same reasons. They have abjured Protestantism, and never can be led to go back to what they know to be hostile to the genius of their country, contrary to the dictates of reason, and repugnant to their holiest affections. Its promised heaven has lost for them all attractions; its hell no longer excites fear in their bosoms; and its ministers openly confess that, as a religious system, Protestantism fails to exercise any authority over the minds, or to exert any influence on the conduct, of the majority of the American people. It demands from them a crippling of their nature and a sacrifice of its rights; once its thraldom has been broken, nothing can induce them to restore it. These minds have impeached Protestantism on Catholic grounds; and when they have been led to see that, their prejudices against Christianity will be removed, and they will be willing to complete their task.

They cannot rest content where they are, for the human mind was made by its Creator for truth, and in the absence of truth it ceases to live. When it refuses its assent to truth it is either because the truth has been travestied and made to appear as false, or because it is seen through a distorted

medium. For the intellect is powerless to reject the truth when seen as the truth, except by committing a crime against itself. It is not in the search after truth, but in the tranquil possession of truth and appropriation of it by contemplation, that man finds the fullest and purest joy. Man craves to solve the enigma of life, and until this solution is known his intelligence cannot be wholly content with such a thing as the investigation of bugs, or baffled by a word which contains a sound and nothing more—the "unknowable."

Moreover, the American mind in one aspect is unlike the European, in that infidelity, scepticism, materialism, and atheism cannot find a lodgment in it for any length of time. The minds of Americans, like the native soil of their country, have something virginal, and furnish no nourishment for these poisonous weeds, which, failing to take root, soon wither. There is a profound reason for this, and it will bear explanation. The reason may be found here: the denial of any one truth, carried out to its logical consequences, involves the denial of all truth. The so-called Reformers of the sixteenth century began by denying the supernatural origin and the divine institution of the Church, and by force of logical sequence proceeded to the denial of its divine authority, and thus, by progression, to the denial of all supernatural

truth; thence the denial descended to philosophy, to politics, to the entire natural order of truth, and finally to the denial of Him from whom proceeds all truth, ending in its logical termination—atheism. The dominant intellectual tendency of Europe has, during these last three centuries, followed the law of negative sequence of error to its ultimate logical conclusion.

On the other hand, the affirmation of any one truth, logically followed out, leads to the knowledge and affirmation of all truth. The American republic began afresh in the last century by the declaration of certain evident truths of reason. The law of its progression consists in tracing these truths out to their logical connection with all other truths, and finally coming to the knowledge of all truth, both in the natural and supernatural order, ending in the affirmation of universal truth and the union with the source of all truth—God. The dominant tendency of the American people is towards the law of the positive sequence of truth. The course of Europe was that of negation; the course of the United States was that of affirmation. The first was destructive, the second was constructive. The one was degrading, the other was elevating. That bred dissension, this created union. Europe, under the lead of the religious revolution of the sixteenth century, turned its back on Catho-

licity and entered upon the downward road that ends in death; the republic of the United States, in affirming man's natural rights, started in the eighteenth century with its face to Catholicity, and is in the ascending way of life to God.

From this point of view the Declaration of American Independence has a higher than political meaning, and it may be said to be the turning-point in history from a negation to an affirmation of truth: interpreting democracy not as a downward but as an upward movement, and placing political society anew on the road to assist man in the fulfilment of his divine destiny.

Christianity, like republicanism, has in the last analysis to rely for its reception and success on reason and conscience and the innate powers of human nature, graciously aided from above as they always are. Let it once be shown that the Catholic interpretation of Christianity is consonant with the dictates of human reason, in accordance with man's normal feelings, favorable to the highest conceptions of man's dignity, and that it presents to his intelligence a destiny which awakens the uttermost action and devotion of all his powers, and you have opened the door to the American people for the reception of the complete evidence of the claims of the Catholic Church, and prepared the way for the universal acceptance of her divine character.

There is a general conviction abroad that the people's share in the government of a nation ought to be enlarged. It must be admitted that the American republic has contributed not a little to form and support this conviction. But the principles of the republic are not, like those of an Utopia, in the air; they are fixedly rooted in the ground of reason and revealed truth. If the framers of the republic set aside certain privileges and institutions inherited from pagan, barbaric, or feudal times, it was not to break with the past, but because these things were unserviceable to a people with the spirit and in the circumstances of the colonists. They were, besides, no less inharmonious with the more rational ideas of equity due to Christian influences; and by their omission the founders of the republic providentially advanced political government, at least for all peoples similarly situated.

When the nature of the American republic is better understood, and the exposition of Christianity is shaped in the light of its own universal principles so as to suit the peculiarities of the American mind, the Catholic Church will not only keep her baptized American children in her fold, but will at the same time remove the prejudices existing in the minds of a large class of non-Catholics, and the dangers apprehended from the

influence of republicanism will be turned into fresh evidences of the Church's divine character.

To sum up: He who does not see the hand of Divine Providence leading to the discovery of the western continent, and directing its settlement and subsequent events towards a more complete application to political society of the universal truths affirmed alike by human reason and Christianity, will fail to interpret rightly and adequately the history of the United States. It is also true that he who sees Heaven's hand in these events, and fails to see that Christ organized a body of men to guard and teach these universal truths to mankind, with the promise of His presence to the end of the world, will fail to interpret rightly and adequately the history of Christianity. He is like a man who sees the light but has his back turned to the sun which gives it. But the discerning mind will not fail to see that the republic and the Catholic Church are working together under the same divine guidance, forming the various races of men and nationalities into a homogeneous people, and by their united action giving a bright promise of a broader and higher development of man than has been heretofore accomplished.

## III.

# CARDINAL GIBBONS AND AMERICAN INSTITUTIONS.

THE following is the address of Cardinal Gibbons as published in the daily papers, on his taking possession of his titular church in Rome, March 25:

"The assignment to me by the Holy Father of this beautiful basilica as my titular church fills me with feelings of joy and gratitude which any words of mine are wholly inadequate to express. For as here in Rome I stand within the first temple raised in honor of the ever-blessed Virgin Mary, so in my far-off home my own cathedral church, the oldest in the United States, is also dedicated to the Mother of God.

"That never-ceasing solicitude which the Sovereign Pontiffs have exhibited in erecting those material temples which are the glory of this city, they have also manifested on a larger scale in rearing spiritual walls to Sion throughout Christendom in every age. Scarcely were the United States of America formed into an independent government when Pope Pius VII. established therein a Catholic hierarchy and appointed the illustrious John Carroll the first bishop of Baltimore. Our Catholic community in those days numbered only a few thousand souls, and they were scattered chiefly through the States

of New York, Pennsylvania, and Maryland. They were served by the merest handful of priests. But now, thanks to the fructifying grace of God, the grain of mustard-seed then planted has grown a large tree, spreading its branches through the length and breadth of our fair land. Where only one bishop was found in the beginning of this century there are now seventy-five exercising spiritual jurisdiction. For this great progress we are indebted, under God and the fostering care of the Holy See, to the civil liberty we enjoy in our enlightened republic.

"Our Holy Father, Leo XIII., in his luminous encyclical on the Constitution of Christian States, declares that the Church is not committed to any particular form of civil government. She adapts herself to all. She leavens all with the sacred leaven of the Gospel. She has lived under absolute empires, under constitutional monarchies, and in free republics, and everywhere she grows and expands. She has often, indeed, been hampered in her divine mission. She has often been forced to struggle for existence wherever despotism has cast its dark shadow, like a plant shut out from the blessed sunlight of heaven. But in the genial atmosphere of liberty she blossoms like the rose.

"For myself, as a citizen of the United States, and without closing my eyes to our shortcomings as a nation, I say with a deep sense of pride and gratitude that I belong to a country where the civil government holds over us the ægis of its protection without interfering with us in the legitimate exercise of our sublime mission as ministers of the Gospel of Christ. Our country has liberty without license, and authority without despotism. She rears no wall to exclude the stranger from coming among us. She has few frowning fortifications to repel the invader, for she is at peace with all the world. She rests secure in the conciousness of her strength and her good-will toward all. Her harbors are open to welcome

the honest immigrant who comes to advance his temporal interests and find a peaceful home. But while we are acknowledged to have a free government, perhaps we do not receive the credit that belongs to us for having also a strong government. Yes, our nation is strong, and her strength lies, under the overruling guidance of Providence, in the majesty and supremacy of the law, in the loyalty of her citizens, and in the affection of her people for her free institutions.

"There are, indeed, grave social problems now engaging the earnest attention of the citizens of the United States; but I have no doubt that, with God's blessing, these problems will be solved by the calm judgment and sound sense of the American people without violence or revolution or any injury to individual right.

"As an evidence of his good-will for the great republic in the West, and as a mark of his appreciation of the venerable hierarchy of the United States, and as an expression of his kind consideration for the ancient see of Baltimore, our Holy Father has been graciously pleased to elevate its present incumbent, in my humble person, to the dignity of the purple. For this mark of his exalted favor I beg to tender the Holy Father my profound thanks in my own name and in the name of the clergy and the faithful. I venture to thank him, also, in the name of my venerable colleagues the bishops, as well as the clergy and the Catholic laity of the United States. I presume to also thank him in the name of our separated brethren in America, who, though not sharing our faith, have shown that they are not insensible—indeed, that they are deeply sensible—of the honor conferred upon our common country, and have again and again expressed their warm admiration for the enlightened statesmanship and apostolic virtues and benevolent character of the illustrious Pontiff who now sits in the chair of St. Peter."

Cardinal Gibbons's office is one that outranks all others in the Church in America, and his interpretation of our American institutions is worthy of his position. The convictions he has expressed have doubtless animated his whole life as a Catholic and a citizen, and all his countrymen will rejoice that he has uttered them with so much emphasis and bravery, and that he has done it in the centre of Christendom. Americans will thank him for it, and accept him as their representative there, for he is fitted by his thorough-going American spirit to interpret us to the peoples and powers of the Old World. Americans do not want the pope, at the head of the most august assembly in the world, representing the whole Christian Church, to speak in favor of empires, monarchies, or republics: that we do not want. What we want is the American cardinal to do what he has done; to have the courage of his convictions there and everywhere else, as becomes our cardinal, so far as he represents the American republic.

It reminds one of Benjamin Franklin championing our cause in Europe before and during the Revolutionary war. What Franklin maintained was that we were not in rebellion; the American colonies were not guilty of that kind of revolution which is a crime. They were fighting for principles which had always been an Englishman's birth-

right, and, I may add, part of the inheritance of all Catholic peoples. Franklin held that the rebels and revolutionists were the members of the British government. And the fact that that was an intense personal conviction with him added immensely to his force as our ambassador.* The Americans never intended to be rebels; they were not rebels. Nowhere in their fundamental law will you find rebellion erected into a principle. So, like Benjamin Franklin, the American cardinal holds, if not officially yet morally, a like place as representing America to those monarchists of Europe who are suspicious of us and who do not appreciate our institutions. The cardinal will be accepted as an American representative, locate him where you please—Rome, Paris, Madrid, Berlin, or

* The following is an extract from Franklin's examination before the House of Commons: "*Question.* How, then, could the Assembly of Pennsylvania assert that laying a tax on them by the Stamp Act was an infringement of their rights? *Answer.* They understood it thus: by the same charter, and otherwise, they are entitled to all the privileges and liberties of Englishmen. They find in the Great Charter and the Petition and Declaration of Rights that one of the privileges of English subjects is that they are not to be taxed but by their common consent; they have therefore relied upon, from the first settlement of the province, that the Parliament never would nor could, by color of that clause in the charter, assume a right of taxing them till it had qualified itself to exercise such right by admitting representatives from the people to be taxed, who ought to make a part of that common consent" (Bigelow's *Life of Franklin*, vol. i. chap. 4).

London. His office constitutes him our high commissioner, and gives him a right to be heard in the serene atmosphere of the Roman Curia, itself not unknowing of liberty and equality in their true sense. St. Augustine's words have ever described the Church's view of human authority, civil or ecclesiastical:

> Christians in office "rule not from a love of power, but from a sense of the duty they owe to others; not because they are proud of authority, but because they love mercy. This is prescribed by the order of nature; it is thus God created man. For 'let them,' He says, 'have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every creeping thing which creepeth upon the earth.' He did not intend that His rational creature, who was made in His image, should have dominion over anything but the irrational creation—not man over man, but man over the beasts. And hence the righteous men in primitive times were made shepherds of cattle rather than kings of men, God intending thus to teach us what the relative position of the creatures is, and what the desert of sin; for it is with justice, we believe, that the condition of slavery is the result of sin." *

And how often soever the Holy See may have counselled men to respect legitimate authority, her great battles have ever been with those who have abused authority.

The Catholic Church has flourished under all forms of government. Her Divine Founder has given her an organism capable of adjustment to

* *City of God*, book xix. chap. 14–15.

every legitimate human institution. She tends to make the people loyal to the reasonable authority of the state, and her influence will strengthen them in the virtues necessary for the public welfare; it has always done so. But the form of government of the United States is preferable to Catholics above other forms. It is more favorable than others to the practice of those virtues which are the necessary conditions of the development of the religious life of man. This government leaves men a larger margin for liberty of action, and hence for co-operation with the guidance of the Holy Spirit, than any other government under the sun. Speaking of the human rights set forth in the Declaration of Independence, the present writer has said that—

"They are divine inasmuch as they declare the rights of the Creator in His creature; they are fundamental, for without the enjoyment of the natural rights which they proclaim man is not a man, but a slave or a chattel; they are practical, for man is, or ought to be, under his Creator, the master of his own destiny and free from any dominion not founded in divine right. The Creator invested man with these rights in order that he might fulfil the duties inseparably attached to them. For these rights put man in possession of himself, and leave him free to reach the end for which his Creator called him into existence. He, therefore, who denies or violates these rights offends God, acts the tyrant, and is an enemy of mankind. And if there be any superior merit in the republican polity of the United States it consists chiefly in this: that while it adds nothing, and can add nothing, to man's natural rights, it expresses more clearly,

guards more securely, and protects more effectually these rights; so that man under its popular institutions enjoys greater liberty in working out his true destiny."

The Catholic Church will, therefore, flourish all the more in this republican country in proportion as Catholics in their civil life keep to the lines of their republicanism. This proposition will still be true even should the New England mind become the prevailing type among us.

In the light of these principles it is an error, radical and gross, to say that the basis of the American character is the spirit of political and religious rebellion. The character that is formed by the institutions of our country and the Catholic character are not antagonistic. American institutions tend to develop independence—personal independence and love of liberty. Christianity rightly understood is seen to foster these qualities. For what other object did the martyrs die than to establish their personal convictions against the decrees of emperors? "You keep the laws of your sovereign," said the martyr St. Lucy to the Roman official; "I keep the laws of my God. You fear Cæsar; I fear the one true God, whom I serve. You are desirous of pleasing men; I desire to please Jesus Christ alone. *Do you pretend to deprive me of the right of acting according to the dictates of my reason and conscience?*" Said Sts. Perpetua and

Felicitas, as they entered the amphitheatre to be martyred: "We have willingly come hither, *that our freedom might suffer no interference.* We gladly lay down our lives to avoid doing anything contrary to our holy religion." And in like manner the peaceful triumphs of Catholic virtue have had no other motive than an heroic purpose to serve God alone in true liberty of spirit, whether as hermits in the wilderness, or Benedictines in the abbeys that were the centres of religious and civil life in the destruction of the Roman Empire and the rushing down of the barbarians, or in the various orders and societies, founded since then, in which the Church has ever offered a method for souls to combine together for freedom and peace, for their own and their neighbor's sanctification.

What we need to-day is men whose spirit is that of the early martyrs. We shall get them in proportion as Catholics cultivate a spirit of independence and personal conviction. The highest development of religion in the soul is when it is assisted by free contemplation of the ultimate causes of things. Intelligence and liberty are the human environments most favorable to the deepening of personal conviction of religious truth and obedience to the interior movements of an enlightened conscience. Mr. Lilly, in one of his brilliant essays, affirms that the question of the hour is the

existence of the supernatural. This is well said for agnostics; but for a well-ordered mind I should say that the question of the hour is how the soul which aspires to the supernatural life shall utilize the advantages of human liberty and intelligence.

We do not need the imperial or kingly ideas of the Old World as aids to our spiritual life as Catholics, any more than we want its anarchical ideas as helps to civil freedom as citizens. Neither do we wish to plant our American ideas in the soil of other nations. The mission of the American Catholic is not to propagate his form of government in any other country. But there is one wish he cherishes in respect to his fellow-Catholics abroad: he wants to be rightly understood, and that is a wish not easily granted. You, reader, if you had been brought up in a monarchy and sympathized with its institutions, as you naturally would have done, would not easily understand other forms of government. In such things most men are what their surroundings make them—you might say all men are, if by the word surroundings you take in the sum of influences, external and internal, to which they are subject. Where will you find a man whose most potent teachers have not been his race and country? Honest men in Europe feel about democracy as we feel about monarchy. And how do you feel about monarchy? Your truest

answer must be, "I don't understand it." And, unless you made your home there, you might live in a monarchy for years and not understand it, and you would not wish to understand it. It does not belong to you. The place is not your home; your home is far away and far different, and you expect sooner or later to go back there. Therefore you are not to be blamed for not understanding them, nor are they to be blamed for not understanding us. When we are abroad, unless called upon to speak, as the cardinal was, it is better for us to keep our mouths shut. So should foreigners act when in this country.

I do not blame Europeans for not understanding us. I only wish to call attention to the many difficulties in the way of getting into the minds of Europeans true views of American affairs. These difficulties Cardinal Gibbons has known how to cope with. He has been able to express the American idea in such terms as not to be misunderstood. And this was not the triumph of diplomatic cunning, but rather that of sincerity and frankness—the true cunning of honest souls. He has carried his point by the simplicity of his thought and the earnestness of its utterance. There is often more in the courage of saying the thing than there is in the thing itself: there is both in Cardinal Gibbons's address. For what is a commonplace in this

country is striking and singular elsewhere, especially in a state of society so differently organized. It took courage to say what he did. It was needed to be said long ago, but others did not say it. Was it lack of courage on their part, or indifference to the providential lessons of the times?

In such cases courage is genius, and we now rejoice in its triumph. It was fitting that the best expression of the good of civil freedom as a favorable human environment for the development of the religious character should be left to be made by an American cardinal in the centre of Christendom. And if I were asked in what the American system of government contributed most to this development, I should say that it is by declaring itself incompetent in spirituals. That is what Europeans, especially men in high station, cannot or will not understand.

"Philip II. of Spain," says Baron Hübner in his *Memoir of Sixtus V.*, vol. ii. chap. ii., "looked upon himself as a civil vicar of Christ. Whenever, in the fulfilment of this imaginary mission, he met with a doubt, he sometimes laid it before his ministers, but he preferred to submit it to his confessor, or to theologians, or to committees specially appointed to examine it, or to congregations composed of doctors of theology. He believed he had two missions to fulfil. He was king and also a little of a pontiff; just as the pope is first a pontiff, then king. In this groove ran all his ideas. Sixtus V. indignantly rejected such pretensions. . . . The deeply-rooted conviction that he was

the civil vicar of Christ on earth can be frequently traced in Philip's letters, and is reproduced in the language of his agents."

Potentates wished, and still wish, to be pontiffs. When dynasties give place to oligarchies, aristocrats wish to be on a par with cardinals. When the tide of atheistic revolution has swept them all away, and blasphemers of the prime verities of reason and revelation are floated into power, they in turn feel under obligation as civil rulers to care for the supreme interests of religion. King Philip and Gambetta, Louis Quartorze, the two Napoleons, and Bismarck and Paul Bert, must nominate bishops; each must play *censor deputatus* for catechisms and theologies; monarchy, aristocracy, bureaucracy, anarchical and atheistic democracy, each inherits from its predecessor the craving for ecclesiastical authority. The Throne of the Fisherman has not had authority enough to publish in Catholic countries its own apostolic decrees without an incessant diplomatic war over the state's placet. In Joseph II.'s case this meddling of the state with spirituals was carried into the very sacristy. Without wishing to go too far the other way, I affirm that this interference by government can never be imposed on the American people. We are glad to see the American cardinal of the same mind. When Church and state were brought into contact in Philip's reign he posed as the Constantine of Christendom,

and Louis Quatorze did worse. Here in America, when Church and state come together, the state says, I am not competent in ecclesiastical affairs; I leave religion in its full liberty. That is what is meant here by separation of Church and state, and that is precisely what Europeans cannot or will not understand. They want to make out that the American state claims to be indifferent to religion. They accuse us of having a theory of government which ignores the moral precepts of the natural law and of the Gospel. Such is not the case, and never has been from the beginning. That is a false interpretation of the American state. By ecclesiastical affairs we mean that organic embodiment of Christianity which the Church is in her creeds, her hierarchy, and her polity. The American state says in reference to all this, I have no manner of right to meddle with you; I have no jurisdiction. By morals, on the other hand, we mean those influences of natural and revealed religion whose sway is general among the vast popular electorate of our country, uniform and definite enough to be a quickening influence upon our public life. To disregard this has ever been deemed a crime against good government among us, and punished accordingly.

The cardinal's address, taken in connection with other events in Pope Leo's pontificate, marks an

epoch in the world's history. If, as many think, democracy will soon assume control of public affairs in the old world, the question is, What kind of a democracy will it be; what influence will be powerful enough to guide it morally aright? No sectarian form of Christianity can be the guide of mighty human forces. So far as men are sectarians, so far do they deviate from the universal truth; and only the universal principles of reason and revelation grasped and wielded by such an organic world-power as the Catholic Church can guide aright the tumultuous masses of mankind when the transition from one phase of civilization to another has begun. The power that could tame the barbarian ancestors of the civilized world exhibits in such men and such utterances as have been herein considered a force competent to guide to its proper destiny the baptized democracy of our day. And we may say in passing that it is difficult to exaggerate the majesty and power which a body of men representing the whole Catholic Church, as the Council of Trent intended the cardinals to do, would possess and exert the world over; the decision of such a body, with the Pope at its head, could not fail to be final.

# IV.

# THE CHURCH AND ITALY

THE revolutionary movement in Italy headed by Victor Emmanuel step by step trampled under foot every principle of religion, morality, and justice that stood between it and its goal. No pretext of the welfare of a people, even when based on truth, can ever make perfidy and treachery lawful, or furnish a covering of texture thick enough to hide from intelligent and upright minds so long and black a list of misdeeds as the Piedmontese subjugation of Southern Italy contains. "All iniquity of nations is execrable." That the natural desire for unity among the Italian people might have been realized by proper and just means, had the religious, intelligent, and influential classes exerted themselves as they were in duty bound to do, there is little room for reasonable doubt. For it would be an unpleasant thing to admit that civilized society, after the action of nineteen centuries of Christianity, could find no

way to satisfy a legitimate aspiration, except by a process involving the violation and subversion of those principles of justice, right, and religion for the maintenance and security of which human society is organized and established. It is indeed strange to see the Latin races, which accepted so thoroughly and for so long a period the true Christian faith, now everywhere subject to violent and revolutionary changes in their political condition. How is this to be reconciled with the fact that Christianity, in response to the primitive instincts of human nature, and in consonance with the laws which govern the whole universe, aims at, and actually brings about when followed, the greatest happiness of man upon earth while securing his perfect bliss hereafter? For so runs the promise of the Divine Founder of Christianity: "A hundred-fold more in this life, and in the world to come life everlasting."

What has beguiled so large a number of the people of Italy, once so profoundly Catholic, that now they should take up the false principles of revolution, should accept a pseudo-science, and unite with secret atheistical societies? How has it come to pass that a people who poured out their blood as freely as water in testimony and defence of the Catholic religion, whose history has given innumerable examples of the highest

form of Christian heroism in ages past, now follows willingly, or at least submits tamely, to the dictation of leaders who are animated with hatred to the Catholic Church, and are bent on the extermination of the Christian faith, and with it of all religion?

Only those who can read in the seeds of time can tell whether such signs as these are to be interpreted as the beginning of the apostasy of the Latin nations from Christianity and their disintegration and ruin; or whether these events are evidence of a latent capacity and a youthful but ill-regulated strength pointing out a transition to a new and better order of things in the future.

It is not a matter of surprise that Catholics of an active faith and a deep sense of personal responsibility feel uneasy at seeing things go from bad to worse in nations which they have been accustomed to look upon as pre-eminently Catholic. Nor is it in human nature for men of energetic wills and sincere patriotism to content themselves when they see the demagogues of false liberty and the conspirators of atheistical secret societies coming to the front and aiming at the destruction of all that makes a country dear to honest men. Nowhere does the Catholic Church teach that the love of one's country is antagonistic to the love of God; nor does the light of her

faith allure to an ignoble repose, or her spirit render her members slaves or cowards.

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## The Unity of Italy.

The idea of unity responds to one of the noblest aspirations of the soul, and wherever it exists it gives birth to just hopes of true greatness. Would that the cry for unity were heard from the hearts of the inhabitants of the whole earth, and that the inward struggle which rages in men's bosoms, and the outward discord which prevails between man and man, between nations and nations, and between races and races, had for ever passed away!

> "When will the hundred summers die,
> And thought and time be born again,
> And newer knowledge, drawing nigh,
> Bring truth that sways the hearts of men?"

Unity is the essence of the Godhead and the animating principle of God's Church; and wherever her spirit penetrates, there the natural desire for unity implanted in the human heart is intensified and universalized, and man seeks to give to it an adequate embodiment in every sphere of his activity. It was this natural instinct for unity guided by the genius of Catholicity that formed the scattered tribes of Europe of former days into nations, uniting them in a grand universal

republic which was properly called Christendom. Who knows but, as there reigned, by the action of an overruling Providence, a political unity in the ancient world which paved the way for the introduction of Christianity, that so there may be in preparation a more perfect political unity of peoples and nations in the modern world to open the way for the universal triumph of Christianity?

But there is a wide difference between recognizing that political unity is favorable to the strength and greatness of nations and the spread and victory of Christianity, and the acceptance of the errors of a class of its promoters, the approval of their injustice, or a compromise with their crimes.

The actual question, therefore, is not concerning the union of the Italian people in one nation, or whether their present unity will be lasting, or revoked, or by internal weakness be dissolved, or shaped in some way for the better. But the actual and pressing question is, How can Italy be withdrawn from the designing men who have managed to get control over her political government under the cloak of Italian unity, and who are plainly leading her on towards a precipice like that of the French Revolution?

There is running through all things, both good and evil, an unconquerable law of logic. What is liberalism on Sunday becomes license on Mon-

day, revolutionism on Tuesday, internationalism on Wednesday, socialism on Thursday, communism on Friday, and anarchy on Saturday. He who only sees the battered stones made by the cannon fired against its walls when the Piedmontese soldiers entered into Rome by Porta Pia, sees naught. There are more notable signs than these for him who knows how to read them.

Is there a man so simple or so ignorant of the temper and designs of the conspirators against civilized society in Europe, as well as in our own free country, who fancies that these desperate men will shrink from shaping their acts in accordance with their ulterior aims?

No one who witnessed the reception of Garibaldi in Rome in the winter of 1875 can doubt as to who holds the place of leader among a very large class of the population of Italy. The views of this man and the party to which he belongs are no secret. "The fall of the Commune," he wrote in June, 1873, "is a misfortune for the whole universe and a defeat for ever to be regretted. . . . I belong to the internationals, and I declare that if I should see arise a society of demons having for its object to combat sovereigns and priests, I would enroll myself in their ranks."

But is there not a sufficient number of conservatives in the present national party of Italy to stop

the men now at the head of affairs before they reach their ultimate designs? Perhaps so; it would be pleasant to believe this. But the present aspect of affairs gives but little hope of this being true. These conservatives, who did not, or could not, or would not stop the spoliation of the Church and the trampling upon her sacred rights; these conservatives, who did not take measures to hinder the Italian radicals from possessing themselves of the legislative power of the present government and pursuing their criminal course—these are not the men to build one's hopes upon in stemming the tide that is now sweeping Italy to her destruction.

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### The Church and the Rights of Man.

How much of the present condition of the Latin peoples, politically, commercially, or socially considered, can be satisfactorily accounted for on the score of climate, or on that of their characteristics as a race, or the stage of their historical development, or the change made in the channels of commerce by new discoveries, it is not our purpose to examine. One declaration we have no hesitation in making at the outset, and that is: If the Latin nations are not in all respects at the present moment equal to others, it is due to one or more of the above-enumerated causes, and not owing, as

some partisans and infidels would have the world believe, to the doctrines of their religious faith.

The Catholic Church cannot be held responsible for the decay of any people in the natural order; for she affirms the natural order, upholds the value of human reason, and asserts the natural rights of man. Her doctrines teach that reason is at the basis of revelation, that human nature is the groundwork of divine grace, and that the aim of Christianity is not the repression or obliteration of the capacities and instincts of man, but their elevation, expansion, and deification.

A few words about the relation of the Catholic Church to the natural rights of man—for on them the liberty of Italy and of every nation must be based—will here be in place. The Catholic Church not only affirms the natural order, but affirms the natural order as divine. For she has ever held the Creator of the universe, of man, and the Author of revelation as one, and therefore welcomed cheerfully whatever was found to be true, good, and beautiful among all the different races, peoples, nations, and tribes of mankind. It is for this reason that she has merited from those who only see antagonism between God and man, between nature and grace, between revelation and science—who believe that "the heathen were devil-begotten and God-forsaken," and "this

world a howling wilderness"—the charge of being superstitious, idolatrous, and pagan.

The special mission of the people of Israel by no manner of means sets aside the idea of the directing care of Divine Providence among the Gentiles, and the mission of other branches of the family of mankind. The heathens, so-called, were under the divine dispensation given to the patriarch Noe; and so that they lived up to the light thus received, they were, if in good faith, in the way of salvation. The written law given by divine inspiration to Moses had the same divine source as the unwritten law given to Noe and the patriarchs, and the patriarchal dispensation was the same as that received from God by Adam. There is no one rational being ever born of the human race who is not in some sort in the covenanted graces of God. It is the glory of the Catholic Church that she exists from the beginning, and in some true sense embraces in her fold all the members of the human race; and of her alone it can be said with truth that she is Catholic—that is, universal both in time and space: *replevit orbem terrarum.*

Affirming the natural order and upholding it as divine, the Catholic Church did not hesitate to recognize the Roman Empire and the established governments of the world under paganism, and

to inculcate the duty, "Render unto Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's." Hence she willingly accepted alliance with the Roman state when Constantine became a Christian, and approved, but with important ameliorations, the Roman code of laws; and of every form of government, whether monarchic or democratic, legitimately established among the Gentile nations of the past or by non-Christian peoples of the present, she acknowledges and maintains the divine right.

The great theologians of the Church, after having eliminated the errors and supplied the deficiencies of the philosophy of Plato and Aristotle, accepted their systems, and the labors of these "immortal heathens" have contributed no little to the glory of Christianity. It is to the labor of Christian monks that the world is indebted for what it possesses of the writings of the "heathen" poets, moralists, and historians. It was the Church's custom to purify the heathen temples by her blessing, and transform their noble buildings, without altering their structure, into Christian temples. It was in the bosom of the Catholic populations of Italy that the revival of classical literature and art took its rise in modern Europe. Notwithstanding the extravagance of some of its votaries, which called forth the righteous indignation and condemnation of Savonarola, its refining

influence, combined with the wealth due to industry and commerce, elevated the Italian cities to a height of civilization that has not been surpassed, if equalled, by the foremost nations of our day. The same may be said of other Catholic nations. When the ships of Spain covered every sea with commerce, and her enterprise broke through the confines of the known world and discovered, by the guiding genius of Columbus, a new continent; when it was said of Spain that the sun never set upon her realms; when Spain was most productive of great warriors, great statesmen, great artists, and great saints, it was then, and precisely because of it, that Spain was most profoundly and devoutly Catholic.

All the joys that spring from the highest intellectual and artistic culture, the happiness derived from man's domestic and social affections, the gratification of the senses in the contemplation of the beauties of creation, and the pleasure drawn from the fruits of industry and commerce—all these, when pure, are not only consistent with, but form a part of, the life and worship of the Catholic faith. The very last accusation for an intelligent man to make against the Catholic Church is that she teaches a "non-human" religion.

Nor is Catholicity out of harmony with Ameri-

can institutions. No political government, at least in modern times, has ventured to rely so far upon the natural ability of man to govern himself as that of the republic of the United States. It may be said that the government of this republic is founded upon man's natural capacity to govern himself as a primary truth or maxim. It assumes the dignity of human nature, presupposes the value of man's reason, and affirms his natural and inalienable rights.

These were declarations of no new truths, for they spring from right reason and the primitive instincts of human nature, and belong, therefore, to that natural order which had ever been asserted and defended by the great theologians and general councils of the Catholic Church. These truths underlie every form of political government founded in Catholic ages, correspond to the instincts of the people, and were only opposed by despots, and Protestant theologians; and the erroneous doctrines concerning the natural order were brought into vogue by the so-called Reformation.

Our American institutions, in the first place, we owe to God, who made us what we are, and in the next place to the Catholic Church, which ever maintained the natural order, man's ability in that order, and his free will. Under God the

founders of our institutions owed nothing to Englishmen or Dutchmen as Protestants, but owed all to the self-evident truths of reason, to man's native instincts of liberty, to the noble traditions of the human race upheld by God's Church and strengthened by the conviction of these truths; their heroic bravery and their stout arms did the rest.

Sincere Catholics are among our foremost patriotic citizens, and, whatever may befall our country, they will not be found among those who would divide her into factions, or who would contract her liberties, or seek to change the popular institutions inherited from our heroic forefathers. Catholic Americans have so learned their religion as to find in it a faithful ally and a firm support of both political and civil liberty. Nowhere, on the other hand, does the Catholic Church reckon among her members more faithful, more fervent, and more devoted children than in the citizens of our republic.

If the Latin peoples are backward in things relating to their political or material or social prosperity, or in any other respect, in the natural order, this is not to be laid to the charge of the Catholic faith. If the races are not wanting to her, the Church will never be wanting to the races.

## The Catholic Church is not Dependent on any Race.

It is quite natural that those races which, by God's providence, have been intimately connected with the Church from her cradle should be inclined to think that the Church is confined to their keeping and is inseparable from their existence. Christianity is undoubtedly affected in its development by the peculiarities of the races through which it is transmitted, and it is natural that they should accentuate those truths and bring to the front those features of organization which commend themselves most to their genius, instincts, and wants. This is only stating a general law held as a maxim among philosophers: *Whatever is received, is received according to the form of the recipient.* Thus, the contact of the Church with the intellectual gifts of the Greeks was the providential occasion of the explicit development and dogmatic definition of the sublimest mysteries of the Christian revelation. And through her connection with the Latins, whose genius runs in the direction of organization and law, the Church perfected her hierarchy and brought forth those regulations necessary to her existence and well-being known under the name of "Canon Law."

But the objective point of Christianity, the Church of Christ, is to embrace in her fold all mankind; she is, in her origin, essence, and institution, independent of any human being, or race of men, or state, or nation.

The Italians, or the Spaniards, or the French, or any other nation or nations may renounce the faith and abandon the Church. England and other nations did so in the religious revolution of the sixteenth century, yet the Church exists and is none the less really and essentially Catholic. The Church did at first exist in all her divinity without including even one nationality or race, and, if it please God, can do so again. The sun would give forth its light though there were no objects within the reach of its rays, the same as when they are reflected from all nature and display all their beauties; so the divinity of the Catholic Church would exist in all its reality and power though there were no Christians to manifest it by their saintly lives, the same as at some future day when, after the victory over her enemies, she will unite in one the whole human race, and all her hidden glory will be displayed.

This law also holds good and is applicable to her visible head, the supreme pastor of the faithful. The pope, as pope, was no less the father of the faithful and exercised his jurisdiction when

driven into the Catacombs, or violently taken by a despot and imprisoned at Fontainebleau, or, as at present, forced by the action of a desperate faction of Italians into retirement in the Vatican, than when his independence and authority were recognized and sustained by the armies of the Emperor Constantine or defended by the sword of Charlemagne, the crowned emperor of Christendom.

"The pope," to adopt the words of Pius IX., "will always be the pope, no matter where he may be, in his state as he was, to-day in the Vatican, perhaps one day in prison."

The perpetuity of the Catholic Church is placed above and beyond all dangers from any human or satanic conspiracies or attacks in that Divinity which is inherently incorporated with her existence, and in that invincible strength of conviction which this Divine Presence imparts to the souls of all her faithful children. It is this indwelling Divine Presence of the Holy Spirit which from the day of Pentecost teaches and governs in her hierarchy, is communicated sacramentally to her members, and animates and pervades, in so far as not restricted by human defects, the whole Church. Hawthorne caught a glimpse of this divine internal principle of life of the Catholic Church and embodied it in the following passage: "If there were," he says, "but angels to

work the Catholic Church instead of the very different class of engineers who now manage its cranks and safety-valves, the system would soon vindicate the dignity and holiness of its origin." * This statement put in plain English would run thus: The Catholic Church is the Church of God actualized upon earth so far as this is possible, human nature being what it is. The indwelling Divine Presence is the key to the Catholic position, and they who cannot perceive and appreciate this, whatever may be their grasp of intellect or the extent of their knowledge, will find themselves baffled in attempting to explain her existence and history; their solution, whatever it may be, will tax the credulity of intelligent men beyond endurance; and at the end of all their efforts for her overthrow these words from her Founder will always stare them in the face: "Non prævalebunt"—"the gates of hell shall not prevail against her." If this language be not understood in plain prose, perhaps it may be in its poetical translation:

"The milk-white hind was fated not to die."

The radical party now in power in Italy may succeed in ruining their glorious country, but they may rest assured that this does not include, as her foes, in every turn of her eventful history, foolishly and stupidly imagine, the ruin of the Catholic Church.

* *Marble Faun*, vol. ii, p. 129, Tauch. Ed.

Nor is it a question as to whether the Church will be reconciled with modern civilization. The real question is whether modern society will follow the principles of eternal justice and right, and reject false teachers; whether it will legislate in accordance with the rules of right reason and the divine truths of Christianity, and turn its back upon revolution, anarchy, and atheism; whether it will act in harmony with God's Church in upholding modern civilization and in spreading God's kingdom upon earth, or return to paganism, barbarism, and savagery. The question, the real question which in the course of human events has become at the present moment among the Latin race a national question, and particularly so in Italy, is this: "Christ or Barabbas?" "Now, Barabbas was a robber."

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## External and Internal.

But a little deeper insight into the relation of authority and liberty in Catholic life may assist us in studying the Italian difficulty.

It is folly to attempt to interpret any society without having first discovered its animating principle and fairly studied the nature and bearings of its organization. How great, then, is the folly of those who seem not to have even a suspicion

that the greatest and grandest and the most lasting of all societies and organizations that the world has ever known—the Catholic Church—can be fathomed by a hasty glance! Yet there are men well known, and reckoned worthy of repute, who bestow more time and pay closer attention to gain knowledge of the structure and habits of the meanest bug than they deem requisite before sitting in judgment on the Church of the living God.

There are men standing high in the public estimation, and some of them deservedly so in other respects, who imagine that the decree of the Vatican Council defining the prerogatives of the successor of St. Peter has seriously altered the constitution of the Catholic Church, when it has done nothing more or less than make the common law of the Church, whose binding force from universal usage and universal reception was admitted, a statute law.

There is a class of men who look upon the Catholic Church as a mere piece of mechanism, abandoned to the control of a set of priests swayed by personal ambition, and whose sole aim is to exercise an absolute tyranny over the consciences of their fellow-Christians; or as an institution still more absurd and vile, for heresy and infidelity have in some instances succeeded

in so blinding men's minds that they do not allow the good the Church does as hers, and, stimulated by malice, lay to her account every conceivable vice and evil. Christ had to defend Himself against the Jews, who accused Him of being possessed by a devil; and is it a wonder that His Church should have to defend herself against the charge of misbelievers and unbelievers as being the synagogue of Satan? The servant is not greater than his master.

Even Goethe, in spite of his anti-Christian, or rather his anti-Protestant, instincts, would have saved these men from their fanatical blindness and their gross errors by imparting to their minds, if they were willing to receive it, a true insight into the real character of the Catholic Church. "Look," he says, after premising that "poems are like stained glasses—"

> "Look into the church from the market square;
> Nothing but gloom and darkness there!
> Shrewd Sir Philistine sees things so;
> Well may he narrow and captious grow
> Who all his life on the outside passes.
>
> "But come, now, and inside we'll go!
> Now round the holy chapel gaze;
> 'Tis all one many-colored blaze;
> Story and emblem, a pictured maze,
> Flash by you:—'tis a noble show.
> Here feel as sons of God baptized,
> With hearts exalted and surprised!"*

* John Dwight's translation.

The "Philistines" we are speaking of infuse into the Catholic Church their own forensic spirit, and fancy that she is only a system of severe commandments, arbitrary laws, and outward ceremonies enforced by an external and absolute authority which, like the old law, places all her children in a state of complete bondage. They are blind to the fact that the Catholic Church confines her precepts, such is her respect for man's liberty, chiefly to the things necessary to salvation, leaving all the rest to be complied with by each individual Christian as moved by the instinct of divine grace.*

The aim of the Catholic Church is not, as they foolishly fancy, to drill her children into a servile army of prætorian guards, but to raise up freemen in Christ, souls actuated by the Holy Spirit—to create saints.

They are also as ignorant of the nature of the authority of the Church as they are of her spirit.

It is the birthright of every member of the Catholic Church freely to follow the promptings of the Holy Spirit, and the office and aim of the authority of the Church is to secure, defend, and protect this Christ-given freedom.

To make more clear this relation of the divine

* See *Sum* of St. Thomas, i. 2, cviii.

external authority of the Church with the divine internal guidance of the Holy Spirit in the soul, a few words of explanation will suffice.

It is the privilege of every soul born to Christ in the waters of regeneration to receive thereby the indwelling presence of the Holy Spirit. It is the bounden duty of every Christian soul to follow with fidelity the promptings of the Holy Spirit. In order that the soul may follow faithfully the indwelling Holy Spirit, it must be secured against all mistakes and delusions and protected against all attacks from error. Every child of the Church has therefore a claim in justice upon the authority of the Church for this security and protection. But it would be absurd and an intolerable indignity for the soul to obey an authority that might lead it astray in a matter concerning its divine life and future destiny; for in the future world no liberty is left for a return to correct the mistakes into which the soul may have fallen. Therefore the claim is founded in right reason and justice that the supreme teaching and governing authority of the Church should be divine—that is, unerring. And it is the intrusion of human authority in the shape of private judgment, or the usurpation of the state, as supreme, in regard to the truths of divine revelation, that is the radical motive of

the resistance to Protestantism on the part of Catholics.

Now, when the soul sees that the external authority is animated by the same divine Spirit, with whose interior promptings it is most anxious to comply; when it appreciates that the aim of external authority is to keep it from straying from the guidance of the indwelling divine Spirit: then obedience to authority becomes easy, and the fulfilment of its commands the source of increased joy and greater liberty, not an irksome task or a crushing burden. This union of the inner and outer divine action is the secret source of Catholic life; the inward principle prompts the obedience of Catholics to the divine external authority of the holy Church. From this is born the consciousness of the soul's filiation with God, whence flows that perfect love and liberty which always accompanies this divine Sonship.

The aim of the authority of the Church and its exercise is the same as that of all other authority—secondary. The Church herself, in this sense, is not an end, but a means to an end. The aim of the authority of the Church is the promotion and the safeguard of the divine action of the indwelling Holy Spirit in the soul, and not a substitution of itself for this.

Just as the object of the authority of the state

is to promote the common good and to protect the rights of its citizens, so the authority of the Church has for its aim the common good of its members and the protection of their rights. And is not the patriotic spirit that moves the legislator to make the law for the common good and protection of his fellow-countrymen identically the same spirit which plants in their bosoms the sense of submission to the law? Consequently, to fix more firmly and to define more accurately the divine authority of the Church in its papal exercise, seen from the inside, is to increase individual action, to open the door to a larger sphere of liberty, and to raise man up to his true manhood in God.

It does, indeed, make all the difference in the world, as the poet Goethe has so well said, to "look at the Church" with "Sir Philistine" in a "narrow and captious" spirit from "the market-square" standpoint, or to gaze on the Church from the inside, where all her divine beauty is displayed and, in a free and lofty spirit, fully enjoyed.

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## Italy and the Holy See.

For the Vatican Council to define the prerogatives of papal authority, and its place and sphere of action in the divine autonomy of the Church,

was to prepare the way for the faithful to follow with greater safety and freedom the inspirations of the Holy Spirit, and thus open the door wider for a fresh influx of divine life and a more vigorous activity.

The work of the Vatican Council is not, however, finished. Other and important tasks are before it, to accomplish which it will be sooner or later reassembled. Divine Providence appears to be shaping events in many ways since the adjournment of the council, so as to render its future labors comparatively easy. There were special causes which made it reasonable that the occupant of St. Peter's chair at Rome should in modern times be an Italian. Owing to the radical changes which have taken place in Europe, these causes no longer have the force they once had. The Church is a universal, not a national society. The boundaries of nations have, to a great extent, been obliterated by the marvellous inventions of the age. The tendency of mankind is, even in spite of itself, to become more and more one family, and of nations to become parts of one great whole rather than separate entities. And even if the wheel of change should, as we devoutly hope, restore to the Pope the patrimony of the Church, the claims of any distinct nationality to the Chair of Peter will scarcely

hold as they once held. The Supreme Pastor of the whole flock of Christ, as befits the Catholic and cosmopolitan spirit of the Church, may now, as in former days, be chosen solely in view of his capacity, fitness, and personal merits, without any regard to his nationality or race.

It must be added to the other great acts of the reigning Pontiff—whom may God preserve!—that he has given to the cardinal senate of the Church a more representative character by choosing for its members a larger number of distinguished men from the different nations of which the family of the Church is composed. This, it is to be hoped, is only a promise of the no distant day when the august senate of the universal Church shall not only be open to men of merit of every Catholic nation of the earth, but also its members be chosen in proportion to the importance of each community, according to the express desire of the Œcumenical Council of Trent. Such a representative body, composed of the *élite* of the entire human race, presided over by the common father of all the faithful, would realize as nearly as possible that ideal tribunal which enlightened statesmen are now looking for, whose office it might be to act as the arbitrator between nation and nation, and between rulers and people.

Since the close of the first session of the Vati-

can Council nearly all the different nations of Europe, including Italy, have, of their own accord, broken the concordats made with the Holy See, and virtually proclaimed a divorce between the state and the Church. This conduct leaves the Church entirely free in the choice of her bishops; which will tend to bring out more clearly the spiritual and popular side of the Church; to set at naught the charge made against her prelates of meddling in purely secular affairs; and to wipe out the stigma of their being involved in the political intrigues of courts.

Another providential advantage is the facility with which the widely-separated races of men may be reached and influenced. Modern inventions and improvements, such as telegraphs, railroads, steamships, cheap postage, the press, have lent an expansive power of action to men which poets, in their boldest flights of fancy, did not reach. These things have changed the face of the material world and the ways of men in conducting their secular business.

Pope Sixtus V. readjusted and improved in his day the outward administration of the Church—a reform that was greatly needed—and placed it by his practical genius, both for method and efficiency, far in advance of his times. This same work might, in some respects and in view of modern

inventions, be done again and with infinite advantage to the interests and prosperity of the whole Church of God.

One of the most, if not the most, important of the congregations administering the affairs of the Church is that *De Propaganda Fide*. It is the centre of missionary enterprises throughout the whole extent of the world. No other object can be of greater interest to every Catholic heart, no branch of the Church's work calls for greater practical wisdom, more burning zeal, and more energetic efficiency.

There is, perhaps, no position in the Church, after that of the papal chair, so great in importance, so vast in its influence, so wide in its action, as the one occupied by the cardinal prefect of the Propaganda. Could it be placed on a footing so as to profit by all the agencies of our day, it would be better prepared to enter upon the new openings now offered to the missionary zeal of the Church in different parts of the world, and become, what it really aims to be, the right arm of the Church in the propagation of the faith.

Who can tell but that one of the results of the present crisis in Italy will lead by an overruling Providence to an entire renewal of the Church, not only in Italy, but throughout the whole world? Such a hope was frequently expressed

by Pius IX., and to prepare the way for it was one of the main purposes of assembling the Vatican Council.

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## Impending Danger.

Scarcely anything is more deplorable to the sincere Christian and true patriot than discord, whether real or apparent, between the religious convictions and the political aspirations of a people. Such a discord divides men into hostile camps, and subjects both religion and the state to the greatest danger. Every sacrifice except that of principle should be made, every material interest that does not involve independence and existence should be yielded up without reluctance or delay, in order to put an end to these conflicts, unless one would risk on one hand apostasy and on the other anarchy.

The discord which has been sown between the state and the Church by the revolutionary movement in Italy has not only excited a violent struggle in the bosom of every Italian, but has created dissension between husband and wife, parents and children, brother and brother, friend and friend, neighbor and neighbor, and placed different classes of society in opposition to each other. The actual struggle going on in Italy is working

every moment untold mischief among the Italian people. Already symptoms of apostasy and signs of anarchy are manifest. Every day these dangers are becoming more menacing. A way out of this dead-lock must be speedily found.

The Church has plainly shown in ages past that she can live and gain the empire over souls, even against the accumulated power of a hostile and persecuting state. She has shown in modern times, both in the United States and in England and Ireland, that independent of the state, and of all other support than the voluntary offerings of her children, even with stinted freedom, she can maintain her independence, grow strong and prosperous. The Church, relying solely upon God, conquered pagan Rome in all its pride of strength, and, if needs be, she can enter again into the arena, and, stripped of all temporal support, face her adversaries and reconquer apostate Rome.

But who can contemplate without great pain a nation, and that nation the Italian, passing through apostasy and anarchy, even though this be necessary, in the opinion of some, as a punishment and purification? Can those who believe so drastic a potion is needed to cure a nation give the assurance that it will not leave it in a feeble and chronic state, rendering revival a work of centuries, and perhaps impossible? Every noble impulse of re-

ligion and humanity should combine to avert so dire a calamity, and with united voice cry out with the prophet: "Is there no balm in Gilead? Is there no physician there? Why, then, is not the wound of the daughter of my people healed?"

The balm that will cure the present wound in Italy is not likely to be found in a closer alliance of the Church with the actual state. For the state throughout Europe, with scarcely an exception, has placed itself in hostility to the Church, and to expect help from this quarter would indeed be to hope in vain, and to rivet more closely the shackles which bind the free action of her members. Is it not the apparent complicity of the Church with some of the governments of Europe that has been one of the principal causes of the loss to a fearful degree of her influence with the more numerous class of society, giving a pretext for the tirades of the socialists, communists, and internationals against her? The Church has been unjustly identified, in the minds of many, with thrones and dynasties whose acts and policy have been as inimical to her interests as to those of the people.

In the present crisis it would be far from wise to rely for aid on states, as states now are—whether they be monarchies, or aristocracies, or republics, or democracies—or upon contending dynasties;

the help needed in the actual crisis can come only from the Most High. "Society," as Pius IX. once observed, "has been enclosed in a labyrinth, out of which it will never issue save by the hand of God."

The prime postulate of a sound Catholic is this: The Church is divine, moved by the instinct of the Holy Spirit in all her supreme and vital acts. The Catholic who does not hold this as a firm and immovable basis has lost, or never had, the true conception of the Church, and is in immediate danger of becoming a rebel and a heretic, if he be not one already. Whoso fails to recognize this permanent divine action in the Church, the light of the Holy Spirit has departed from his soul, and he becomes thereby external to the Church. Of this truth De Lamennais, Döllinger, Loyson, are modern and sad examples. Instead of seeking a deeper insight into the nature of the Church, and drawing from thence the light and the strength to labor for the renewal of Christianity and the unity of Christendom, they became blinded by passion and deluded by personal conceits, and have fallen into heresy and sectarianism. For the Divine Spirit embodied in the Church and the Divine Spirit indwelling in every Christian soul are one and the same Divine Spirit, and they bear testimony to each other, and work together for the same end.

# V.

# THE CHURCH AND FRANCE.

OUR purpose in this article is not to confine the attention of our readers to the affairs of France, nor have we the design of narrating the successive events which brought about the present state of things in that nation; but we wish to offer a view of the principles involved in the struggle and their bearing on the great interests of Europe in general, actual and prospective.

The transformation that has taken place in the nations of Europe, the expansion of their narrow lines of policy into broader political principles, has been so rapid and powerful that its force in our day has passed beyond all possible human control. These principles have become profound convictions, and for not heeding them the people of France dethroned Charles X. and Louis Philippe; and had Henry V. been placed upon the throne of France with the intention of attempting to restore the ancient *régime*, it would have

been as vain, even though he should have had Marshal MacMahon and the army at his command to back him, as an effort to stem and throw back the mighty torrents that pour their waters over the precipice of Niagara.

The tendency of modern society to a political equality, without distinction of the privileges of birth or rank, has its root in the spirit of Christianity. The Catholic Church, in this sense, is the most democratic institution that has ever existed upon this earth. There is no barrier in the path of its humblest member to become its chief in power and dignity. It is not seldom, too, that those who have risen from the lowest walk in life have been elected to this high position.

The spirit of an age, rightly interpreted, is the breath of the Almighty stirring within men's souls, which finds its utterance in their voices, even in spite of themselves; and it is plain to impartial observers that God's will in this age is to lead men to serve Him in a spirit of rational liberty. Nowhere has the Catholic Church been given such fair play, though this is yet imperfect, as in the democratic republic of the United States. This fact has been recognized by the supreme pastors of the faithful, Pius IX. and Leo XIII., and again and again they have called the attention of the world to it.

France had the opportunity under the presidency of Marshal MacMahon, if she had only known how to profit by it, of forming a political government adapted to the genius and character of her people and in harmony with her present wants and future greatness; to govern herself, if she wished it, independently of an emperor or an hereditary monarch; and this task will be yet accomplished, unless hindered by that enemy of all rational liberty—a destructive radicalism.

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## Two Movements in the World.

There have been from the beginning only two fundamental movements in this world, and these are becoming in Europe more and more distinct, powerful, and antagonistic. The one has its source in the Catholic Church, which is the concrete form of the direct action of God on society in view of man's true destiny. The other consists in rebellion against this divine action, and finds on earth its headquarters and expression in heresies, in despotisms, and, more particularly in recent days—at least in Europe—in organized secret societies.

## First Movement.

The order and stability of modern society and civilization are based upon the truths which find their root and support in the doctrines unswervingly taught and uncompromisingly upheld by the Catholic Church. Among these great truths are the divinity of Christ and the divine establishment and perpetuity of his Church upon earth; the unquestionable responsibility of both kings and peoples to the law of God; the indissolubility of the marriage tie and the sacredness of the family; the reign of the law of justice between man and man, and, when violated, the strict obligation of restitution; the sacredness of oaths and the equality of all men, without distinction of rank, color, or race, before God. By the undeviating application of these and other great first-truths of divine revelation and of human reason, at the cost of the lives of millions of her children; by withstanding the fierce attacks of the barbarians of the northern forests of Europe; by her contest with Mahomet and his followers; and by her resistance to the errors and vices of her inconsistent and disobedient children, the Catholic Church, instinct with divine life, formed the conscience of modern society, founded the nations of Europe, united them in a universal commonwealth called Christen-

dom, established the reign of God in men's souls upon earth, as preliminary to the kingdom of heaven hereafter.

Such has been the work of the first movement.

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## Second Movement.

All heresies, all despotisms, all anti-social secret societies have this postulate in common: that the overthrow of the Catholic Church is a *sine qua non* to their attaining ultimate success. Hence there is an instinctive and unanimous sympathy among their adherents whenever there is an attack aimed against the Catholic Church—an unmistakable sign of their common origin and an unquestionable proof of their parentage. Peoples distinguished for their profession of universal toleration and championship of the right of every individual to the enjoyment of his own religious convictions will applaud to the skies the violation of these principles, provided the persecuted be only Catholics! Every right guaranteed by constitutional law, every principle of divine and human justice, may be trampled under foot—yea, with sympathy and applause—provided those who do so are animated with hatred for the Catholic

Church! Witness the public sympathy, both in England and the United States, with the war of imprisonments, fines, and banishments waged but a few years ago against Catholics, with murderous intent against their Church, by the "iron and blood" chancellor of the Hohenzollern Empire; witness the confiscations and sacrilegious spoliations by the crew of infidels of Italy, led by a Mancini, against the Church; witness the banishment of all the Catholic priests without exception from its district, in violation of the federal constitution, by the canton of Berne, and the robbery of the churches built by the sacrifices of loyal Catholics, which are given over to the use of a rebellious and insignificant faction by the authorities of the Swiss so-called republic; witness, to come nearer home, the assassination, by the agents of secret societies, of the President of Equador, and, within a few weeks after, the poisoning of the Archbishop of Quito at the altar! There was none to raise a voice, not to say a cry of horror or indignation, among these sticklers for liberty and justice, in condemnation of this wholesale tyranny, these cruel persecutions, and this secret and deadly violence. This is well known by the atheists, who aim at the ruin of all Christian institutions: that to delude a large class in these so-called liberty-loving countries, and gain their sympathy, material aid, and

the use and support of their press, all that is required to make them run like an enraged bull at a red rag is to shout lustily, "Ultramontanism!" "Vaticanism!" "Popery!"

The present crisis in France is fraught with her deliverance as well as that of Europe from the most desperate and wide-spread organized conspiracy that has ever existed in the world. They fail to interpret public events rightly and to discern the signs of the times who take it to mean anything less than the saving of Christianity and modern civilization in Europe.

> "Let order die!
>
> . . . . . .
>
> Let one spirit of the first-born Cain
> Reign in all bosoms, that, each heart being set
> On bloody courses, the rude scene may end
> And darkness be the burier of the dead."

Such is their aim, and it is also their undisguised and outspoken word; for these men "know not how to blush."

And these are the chief characteristics of the second movement.

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## The Result of the Battle.

This movement in its weak beginnings in France, regarding only impending dangers to the state, will

not exhaust itself until it has restored the Catholic Church to her normal position in Europe. This final result is no more intended by the leaders of the movement than it was the design of the Allied Powers to restore the Papacy at the downfall of the first Napoleon. It is a divine law that man acts, but God directs.

> "There's a divinity that shapes our ends,
> Rough-hew them how we will."

There is, then, this increasing purpose running through the history of God's dealing with the human race: to bring into clearer light the divine character of His Church, His spouse, rendering it less and less possible for men to recognize His existence and not be Christians, and, being Christians, not to be Catholics. This is the key of universal history.

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## Errors of Modern Philosophy.

Europe for the past century has been in the state of transition to a new epoch—a renewal of Catholicity. This statement is in flat contradiction with the assertions of some modern thinkers who claim the title of philosophers. They would have us believe that religious motives are exhausted; or, as they term it, "theological motives," which is the

same thing, for theology is nothing else than the scientific statement of religion. This is equivalent to saying that human nature is exhausted; for religion is what lies deepest in human nature, and consequently all other motives will be exhausted before those of religion.

Religion is of the very essence of man's nature, for it springs from the intellectual sense of his entire dependence for existence on an absolute cause. Religion is, in its last analysis, reason's recognition of God and man's fulfilment of his relations to God. Religion and reason are, therefore, correlative.

Men who pretend that religious motives have ceased to have a strong hold upon human nature labor under a complete hallucination. Can they fancy that those faculties through which God acts on the soul, and which bring the soul in contact with God, have by some strange freak suddenly become defunct? That religious motives to an almost incredible extent have become extinct in some men's souls we, with pain and pity, admit; that this is the case with the bulk of mankind is an egregious mistake. There has seldom been an age when religious questions occupied so large a share of intellectual attention as our own; and religious motives still influence the bulk of mankind in their conduct.

It is too true, however, that a class of men have fatally succeeded, by a false education and an erroneous philosophy, in paralyzing the action of the noblest faculties of the soul; but this disease is confined to a small class. Deluded men! they would have the rest of mankind to esteem *their* degradation as a privilege and count their shame an honor.

The second form in which the symptoms of this malady manifest themselves is the eschewing of the first principles of sound logic. As according to our philosophy, "God is a provisionary idea," or is "man's intuition of himself projected into space," or is "the creation of a wish"—so runs their premise; and as the religious faculties of the soul have become extinct, therefore they cry: "God *is* extinct," "the soul's immortality is a fable," and "religion is a worn-out superstition"!

The eternal God is, and in Him is all that lives, moves, and exists, and His providence directs all things to the end for which He called them into existence.

God is not ousted from His creation as easily as these ambitious philosophers, who are so ready to occupy His place in the universe, would have the world believe.

The mistake of a class of speculative thinkers consists in regarding the state of transition of soci-

ety from one epoch to another—in interpreting a phase of religion—as the change and vanishing of the indestructible elements of all religion.

A certain class of truths suits one age, awakens the greatest enthusiasm and profoundest devotion, and in another epoch falls almost dead upon the ears of men and hardly calls forth an audible response. Epochs differ from epochs in their aspirations and instincts, like those of individuals; and this is a law of the providential education and growth of the human race. One race of men differs from another in its capacity to seize hold of, appreciate, and give the proper expression to certain truths, and in turn is brought to the front ranks in the providential march of humanity. And this is the intention of the Author of the human family. Men of the same race differ also greatly from each other; for in the wide universe there are no two things in all respects precisely alike, and in this is seen displayed God's infinite creative power.

These separate epochs, this variety of races, and these differences among men afford to Christianity the opportunities and means of giving expression to the great truths contained in all religions of which she is the only adequate representation. For Christianity is the synthesis of all the scattered truths of every form of religion which has existed from the beginning of the world, and the Catholic Church

is Christianity's complete organic, living form. Christianity is the abstract expression of the Catholic Church, which, in the successive centuries of her existence, has come in contact with every race of men, and has known how to Christianize and retain them in her fold in harmony with their natural instincts. She has met humanity in every stage of its development, from the intellectual and refined Greek to the man-eating savage, and, by working on the foundations of nature, she has captivated them to the easy yoke of Christ. The Catholic Church alone has known how to supply the defects of human nature and correct its vices while allowing it to give free play to its instincts and to retain the charm of its native originality; and this has been effected, not by a superior human sagacity or a preternatural craft, as sophists would make the world believe, but because in her dwells that Divine Spirit which breathed into man's nostrils the breath of life, and made him a living, rational, immortal soul, and in whom he lives, moves, and has his being.

God is not extinct nor are religious motives effete. The mistake of these theorizers consists in supposing that the present is the finality of Christianity, whereas the hand of God is opening the way by purifying His Church, by directing the movements of nations and the issues of the world, to the end that

she may shape the coming future beyond all past experience in her progressive approach to the perfect realization of her Divine Ideal.

> "An age comes on, which came three times of old,
> When the enfeebled nations shall stand still
> To be by Christian science shaped at will."

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## A New United Christendom.

Do intelligent Christians appreciate the import of the questions which engage and agitate the active intellect of their contemporaries? Are they sensible of the weight of their responsibilities, and ready to lift their minds and hearts to the grandeur of the mission of the age in which their lot is cast?

He who can see things as they are throughout the world where the Christian faith has spread, and appreciate them rightly, cannot help seeing that a fresh unfolding of the great design of Christianity in all its simplicity, vastness, and splendor, and a stricter application of its principles in the several spheres of life, are alone adequate to meet all the genuine aspirations and satisfy the honest demands of this age.

The attack is against the primary truths of reason no less than the essential truths of divine reve-

lation, and the defence, to be adequate and victorious, must at least be equal to the attack. Thus the law of reaction is forcing upon the leading Christian minds a reaffirmation of natural and revealed truths with a completeness and a force which the world has not up to this time witnessed. There can be no compromise with the false principles of atheists in religion, revolutionists in the state, and anarchists in society. Their errors must be refuted and their movements counteracted. The positive side of truth must be brought out and clothed in all its beauty. The true picture must be presented and contrasted with the false, so as to captivate the intelligence and enlist the enthusiasm of the active minds of the youth of the age. This is the great work that, in the economy of God, is mainly left to the initiative of individual minds among the members of His Church. It is the work of Catholic genius illuminated by the light and guided by the interior inspirations of the Holy Spirit. The Church, in every critical or important epoch in her history, has always given birth to providential men; such were Gregory, Augustine, Benedict, Bernard, Francis, Dominic, Neri, Ignatius, Vincent of Paul. As in the past, so in the present, a new phase of the Church will be presented to the world—one that will reveal more clearly and completely her divine character.

The reintegration into general principles of the scattered truths contained in the religious, social, and political sects and parties of our day would reveal to all upright souls their own ideal more clearly and completely, and at the same time present to them the practical measures and force necessary to its realization. By this process sects and parties would become as far as possible extinct—not by way of antagonism, but by the power of assimilation and attraction. Just as the lesser magnet is drawn to the greater by cords of attraction identical with its own, only more intense, more powerful and all-embracing, so the fragmentary truths contained in error, when reintegrated in their general principles, will be drawn to them and their division disappear. Christianity once more will be perfect in one, and, uniting its forces for the conversion of the world, will direct humanity as one man to its divine destination.

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## The Kingdom of God on Earth.

Is not such a consummation the answer to the devout aspiration of all sincere Christian souls? Is it not also the promise of Christianity, and was it not the object of the most earnest prayer of its Foun-

der when upon earth? The Son of God did not pray in vain.

Underneath all the errors and evils found among men of all times is the prime desire for the knowledge of the true and the native hunger for the good. Now, the absolute truth which contains all truth, and the absolute good which contains the supreme good, is God. God is therefore the ideal of the rational soul, the term of all its seeking, and the end of all its wishes. The perfect union of the soul with God is bliss.

Again, Christianity does not confine itself to the reign of God in the soul; it seeks to establish the reign of God upon earth. "Thy kingdom come; Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven," was the petition of Christ to His heavenly Father. His life was not confined to contemplation and preaching; He "went about doing good."

Genuine contemplation and action are inseparable. He who sees truth loves truth, and he who loves truth seeks to spread the knowledge and the practice of truth. Divine love is infinitely active, and, when it has entered the human heart and has set it on fire, it pushes man to all outward perfection and visible justice. No men have labored so zealously and so efficiently for their fellow-men, for the establishment of God's kingdom upon earth, as the saints of God.

The love of God and the love of man are one. God promises His reward not to the ignorant, or to the indolent, or to the indifferent, but to those who visit the prisoner, feed the hungry, give drink to the thirsty, clothe the naked—to the doing of good works as the evidence of the true faith.

The Catholic Church teaches to men their true relations to God and to their fellow-men, and by the practical application of the principles which govern these relations are removed the errors and vices which hinder the establishment of the reign of God in men's souls and everywhere upon earth. The history of civilization since the moment of the Church's institution on the day of Pentecost is nothing else than a record of the several steps of progress of society, under the guidance of the Catholic Church, in reaching this goal. Whatever elements the nineteenth century possesses superior to Judaism, paganism, barbarism, and Islamism are due to the uninterrupted action of Christ upon the world through the Catholic Church. Modern civilization may be defined as the result of nineteen centuries of action of the Holy Spirit dwelling in the Catholic Church, establishing the reign of God in men's souls and the kingdom of heaven upon earth. "God is now taking the dross out of the crucible, so as to render His people free from all alloy, and once more to clothe the Church for which our Lord

delivered Himself up with beauty resplendent with glory. And when God shall have accomplished this He will remove the rod of His justice from the Church, and, that His divine name may no longer be blasphemed, He will give her victory, a victory far more brilliant than her sufferings have been terrible. May this triumph not be delayed!" *

The Catholic Church places no gulf between God and humanity, or divorce between heaven and earth, or antagonism between revelation and reason, or religion and science; and she repudiates the doctrine which emphasizes faith at the expense of good works. Hence the accusation of modern infidels against Christianity, as confining itself exclusively to man's happiness hereafter—"a post-mortem happiness"—while ignoring his actual, present good—"ante-mortem happiness"—may have some show of reason as against Protestant sects, especially the Calvinistic sect; but it is altogether false when made against the Catholic Church.

It is through the faithful reception of the divine action of the Catholic Church by individuals and society that the highest good possible for man here and hereafter can be surely attained; and this needs only clearly to be seen to restore to her true and visible fold all the descendants of

* Letter of Pope Pius IX. to Mgr. Lachat, April 27, 1876.

the members separated from the Catholic Church by the religious revolution of the sixteenth century, at least all who are in good faith.

And it is the bringing out into a clearer light the divine side of the Church, and to the front those truths which eliminate the errors rife in our day and their stricter application to present evils, that, by the instinct of the Holy Spirit, now preoccupies the active, intelligent mind of Catholics throughout the world, especially in countries where the dangers are most imminent, such as France, Germany, and Italy.

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## Promises, False and True.

There are two controlling forces, explain their origin as we may, visible in the conflicting movements of human affairs in this world. The one places man in possession of the Supreme Good, and makes him a co-worker with his Creator in the realization of the ideal for which God called this great universe into existence. The other is instigated by the enemy of God and the human race, seeking by false promises to lead man astray.

"You shall be as gods, knowing good and evil," was Satan's promise to our first parents. This promise contained what was desirable for man;

God had implanted in the human soul the aspiration for its fulfilment. But what the enemy promised he had not the power to perform, and the road that he pointed out as leading to the fulfilment of the promise led in a wrong direction.

The right answer of our first parents to Satan would have been: "We know that God has made our souls in His own image and likeness, and that we shall be made participators of His Divine Nature, and thereby deified; and as our Creator has endowed us with the gift of intelligence, we shall also gain the knowledge of good and evil—for this is its proper object. And we know also with certitude that we shall gain these great rewards by following the paths which God has pointed out to us." Had they thus spoken, they would have, in the strength of their innocence and conscious rectitude, added: "Begone, tempter! Thou art a liar; for what thou dost promise it is not thine to give; and instead of wishing our elevation, thou seekest to accomplish our fall and utter ruin!"

As in the beginning, so now, Satan seizes hold of the noblest aspirations of the soul, and, by deceiving men under the guise of a real good, leads them quite astray. For what underlies the promises of Protestantism and its innumerable sects; and rationalism, so-called, and its different phases;

and the secularists, positivists, scientists, atheists, religious radicals, materialists, spiritists, revolutionists, evolutionists, socialists, pessimists, free-religionists, communists, internationalists, optimists, theists, nihilists, *kulturkämpfer*, agnostics, intuitionists, transcendentalists, and other sects and parties too numerous to mention—for their name is legion, and their confusion of tongues is as great as that of Babel—what underlies their promises is in one aspect true and in a sense desirable. The right answer to all their fine promises is this: "You affirm some undoubted truths and you hold out a desirable good; but the way that you point out for realizing the one and attaining the other is subversive of all truth and the supreme good, and it will not reach even what you aim at, but end in entire disappointment and anarchy. Put together the fragmentary truths affirmed by each of your different religious sects, and you will find them all contained in Catholicity. Make a list of all the honest demands for ameliorations and reforms in man's social, industrial, and political condition—it will not be a short one—and you will discover that they have their truth in the spirit, and are justified by the teachings and the practice, of the Catholic Church." O sincere seeker after truth! did you but know it, the path lies open before you to a perennial fountain of truth, where you

can slake to the full that thirst which has so long tormented your soul. O sincere lover of your fellow-men! there is a living body which you may enter and co-operate with, whose divine action is realizing a heavenly vision for the whole human race, brighter and more beautiful than the ideal which so often haunts your lonely dreams!

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## Conclusion.

The phase of Catholicity which is now coming slowly to the light will gather up all the rich treasures of the past, march in response to every honest demand of the interests of the actual present, and guide the genuine aspirations of the race in the sure way to the more perfect future of its hopes.

This sublime mission is not the self-imposed work of any man or party of men, but the divinely-imposed task of religion, of the present, visible, living body of Christ, the Church of God. None other has the power to renew the world, unite together in one band the whole human race, and direct its energies to enterprises worthy of man's great destiny. Legitimists, imperialists, Orleanists, republicans, anti-republicans—these parties in France may contribute

more or less as instruments to the initiation of the new order of things in Europe, but that is all. They will betray the cause of God and the interests of humanity, if they should attempt to turn it to any individual account or to any partisan triumph, whether called religious or political. The enemies of the Church may place hindrances in her way, but they cannot stop her in reaching her goal. God alone rules and reigns.

Strange destiny that of France, to be the leader of Europe both for good and for evil! France was the first nation converted to Christianity in western Europe, and the first to proclaim herself, as a nation, infidel. France, let us trust, will be the first to recover from her errors and give the initial blow that will end in the overthrow of the enemies of modern civilization and Christianity.

# VI.

## ST. CATHERINE OF GENOA.

THE publication of the Life of St. Catherine of Genoa at this moment is, for several reasons, opportune.

The reading of it will correct the misconceptions of many who honestly fancy that the Catholic Church encourages a mechanical piety, fixes the attention of the soul almost, if not altogether, on outward observances, and inculcates nothing beyond a complete submission to her external authority and discipline.

The life of our Saint is an example of the reverse of that picture. It makes clear the truth that the immediate guide of the Christian soul is the Holy Spirit; for it was her uncommon fidelity to the aspirations of the Holy Spirit that made this holy woman worthy of being numbered by

the Church among that class of her most cherished children who have attained the highest degree of divine love which it is possible for human beings to reach upon earth.

The mistake of the persons above spoken of arises from their failing to see that the indwelling Holy Spirit is the divine life of the Church, and that her Sacraments have for their end to convey the Holy Spirit to the soul. It arises also from their not sufficiently appreciating the necessity of the authority and discipline of the Church, as safeguards to the soul from being led astray from the paths of the Holy Spirit.

Without doubt God could have, if He had so pleased, saved and sanctified the souls of men in spite of their ignorance, perversity, and weakness, by the immediate communication and action of the Holy Spirit in their souls, independently of an external organization like the Church. But such was not His pleasure, or His plan. For His own wise reasons He chose to establish a Church, which He authorized to teach the world whatsoever He had commanded, which He promised to be with unto the end of all time, whose ministry, sacraments, and government should serve Him, as had His body, to continue and complete, by a visible means, the work of man's redemption.

Hence it is an entirely false view of the nature

and design of the Church to suppose that it was intended to be, or is in its action, or ever was, or ever can be, a substitute for the authority of Christ, or the immediate guidance of the Holy Spirit in the Christian soul.

The authority of the Church is no other than the authority of Christ, as He Himself has declared, "He that heareth you, heareth Me."* The sacraments are nothing else than the channels, or visible means, of communicating the Holy Spirit to the soul. It is the divine action in the Church which gives to its external organization the principal reason for its existence.

And it is equally false, and at the same time absurd, to suppose for a moment that the Holy Spirit indwelling in the Church and embodied in her visible authority, and the same Holy Spirit dwelling in and inspiring the Christian souls, should ever contradict each other or come into collision. Whenever, by supposition, such collision takes place, be assured it is not the work of the Holy Spirit, but the consequence of ignorance, error, or perversity on the part of the individual; for it must not be forgotten, or ever be lost sight of, that it pleased Christ our Lord to promise, *not* to each individual Christian but to His Church, that "the gates of hell shall not prevail against it."†

* St. Luke x. 16. † St. Matthew xvi. 18.

The sincerity of the Christian soul in following the inspirations of the Holy Spirit will be shown, in case of uncertainty, by its prompt obedience to the voice of the Holy Church. It is only when the soul goes astray from the paths of the Holy Spirit it finds trammels to its feet; otherwise it is conscious of perfect liberty in the Church of God.

From the foregoing truths the following practical rule of safe-conduct can be drawn. The immediate guide of the soul to salvation and sanctification is the Holy Spirit, and the criterion or test that the soul is guided by the Holy Spirit is its ready obedience to the authority of the Church. With this rule there can be no danger of going astray, and the soul can walk in absolute security, in the ways of sanctity.

This is the way in which all the saints have trod to arrive at Christian perfection, but no life illustrates this truth more plainly, so far as we are aware, than the life of our saint.

But there is another difficulty solved by the holy life of St. Catherine; for there are some who think that the Church fosters a sanctity which is not concerned with this present life, rendering one useless to society and indifferent to the great needs of humanity.

The love of God and the love of one's neigh-

bor, as taught by Christ and His Apostles, are essentially one. If the saints of the Church were distinguished for their great love for God, they ought therefore to be equally distinguished for their great love for mankind. The one is the test of the other. If any man say, "I love God, and hateth his neighbor, he is a liar." Such is the emphatic language of St. John.*

Let us apply this test with the history of the Church and the biographies of her saints in our hands. Take, for example, the religious orders: it is a fair field, for nearly all of them were founded by saints, whose special aim it was to teach and practise Christian perfection, as understood by the Catholic Church. What do the history and biography of the religious orders teach us? All that we possess of the classics, and of literature in every department, pagan as well as Christian, prior to the invention of the art of printing, we owe exclusively to the industry and labor of the early monks. Not a slight service. These men were for the most part the founders and professors of the great universities and colleges in England, Italy, Spain, France, Germany, and Ireland. The last were not the least, for the monks of Ireland were famous as founders of colleges and seats of learning in their own as

* 1 Ep. St. John.

well as in foreign countries. Monks were the pioneers in agriculture, and in many industrial and mechanical arts, while their monasteries became the centres of great cities, many of which still retain their names. They were the sowers of those seeds whose fruits, developed by time, men of our day claim under the title of "modern civilization"!

"Idle monks and nuns" were they? They were, as a class, men and women who ate and drank less, worked harder, and did more for intellectual progress, civilization, and social well-being than any other body of men and women whose record can be found on the pages of history, or who can be pointed out in this nineteenth century!

As for their works of mercy, such is and has been their superabundance that it is difficult to know where to begin and how to leave off in reading their records.

The brotherhoods and sisterhoods in the Church, devoted to the care and relief of the sick, the orphan, the aged, the poor, the captive, the prisoner, the insane, and the other victims of the thousand-and-one ills that human nature is heir to, as well as of those which are self-inflicted —who can count them?

True, there were some religious orders which were

given almost exclusively to contemplation, but these were exceptional vocations, and were so considered by the Church. These had also a most important social bearing and practical value, which, however, this is not the place to demonstrate. But the great majority of her saints were men and women whose hearts were overflowing with warm and active sympathy for their race, consecrating their energies to its improvement spiritually, intellectually, morally, and bodily, and not seldom laying down their lives for its sake.

That the Church did not compel all her children, seeking Christian perfection, into one uniform type, is true. Governed by that divine wisdom which made man differ from man in his talents and aptitudes, she did not attempt to mar and wrong their nature, but sought to elevate and sanctify each in his own peculiar individuality.

Read the life of St. Catherine, and in imagination fancy her in the city hospital of Genoa, charged not only with the supervision and responsibility of its finances, but also overseeing the care of its sick inmates, taking an active, personal part in its duties as one of its nurses, and conducting the whole establishment with strict economy, perfect order, and the tenderest care and love! Fancy this for a moment in the city hospital of Genoa in the sixteenth century, and seek for her compeer in

the city of New York, or in any other city in the world, in our day, and if you find one, and outside of the Catholic Church, then, but not till then, you may repeat to your heart's content that she fosters a sanctity which turns one's attention altogether away from this world, and makes one indifferent to the wants of humanity.

St. Catherine's life teaches another lesson to those whose mental eyes are not closed to facts as plain as the sun when shining at noonday.

We hear much said, and not a little is written, in the United States and in England, about the exclusion of woman from spheres of action for which her natural aptitudes make her equal, and in many cases render her superior, to man; of her partial education, and in many cases the inferior position which she is forced to accept in society.

Strange that we hear no such complaints in Catholic society or from Catholic women! Is it because they have been taught to hug the chains which make them slaves? or that they are denied liberty of speech? or that their lips are closed by arbitrary authority? Not at all. The reason is plain. Women, no less than men, are free to occupy any position whose duties and functions they have the intelligence or aptitude to fulfil. They have the opportunities and are free to obtain the highest education their capacities are

capable of. This every Catholic woman knows and feels, and hence the absence of all consciousness, in the Church, of being deprived of her rights, of oppression and of injustice.

One has but to open his eyes and read the pages of ecclesiastical history to be convinced that in the Catholic Church there has been no lack of freedom of action for women. Look for a moment at the countless number of sisterhoods in the Church. Some count their members by thousands, all under the government of one head, a woman, and elected by themselves for life; others, again, each house forming a separate organization, with a superior of its own, elected for a limited period. In fact, there is no form of organization and government of which they do not give us an example, and carried on successfully, showing a practical ability in this field of action which no one can call in question. Then there is no kind of labor, literary, scientific, mechanical, as well as charitable, in which they may not engage, according to their abilities and strength. Who shall enumerate the different kinds of literary institutions, schools, and academies under their direction, and confessedly superior in their kind? Who shall count the hospitals, the orphanages, the reformatories, the insane asylums, and other similar institutions,

where they have proved their capacity to be above that of men? All roads in the Church are open to woman's energies and capacities, and she knows and is conscious of this freedom; and, what is more, she is equally aware that whatever she has ability to do will receive from the Church encouragement, sanction, and that honor which is due to her labor, her devotion, and her genius.

Few great undertakings in the Church have been conceived and carried on to success without the co-operation, in some shape, of women. The great majority of her saints are of their sex, and they are honored and placed on her altars equally with men. It is not an unheard-of event that women, by their scientific and literary attainments, have won from Catholic universities the title of doctor. St. Teresa is represented as an authorized teacher, with a pen in hand, and with a doctor's cap. It would carry us altogether too far beyond our limits to show how largely the writings of women in the Church have contributed to the body and the perfection of the science of theology.

In this respect, also, our saint was distinguished. Her spiritual dialogues and her treatise on purgatory have been recognized, by those competent to judge in such matters, as masterpieces

in spiritual literature. St. Francis of Sales, that great master in spiritual life, in whose city we have the consolation of writing, was accustomed to read the latter twice a year. Frederick Schlegel, who was the first to translate St. Catherine's dialogues into German, regarded them as seldom if ever equalled in beauty of style; and such has been the effect of the example of Christian perfection in our saint that even the "American Tract Society" could not resist its attraction, and published a short sketch of her life among its tracts, with the title of her name by marriage, Catherine Adorno.

It was fitting that the life of St. Catherine of Genoa should be translated for the first time into English by one who is now no more, but who was, while living, distinguished, like our saint, for her intellectual gifts, for her charity toward the poor and the abandoned, and in consecrating her pen to the cause and the glory of God's Church.

# VII.

# CATHOLICITY AND THE TENDENCIES OF THE AGE.

IT is an obvious fact that a considerable number of minds in our day have been trained in scientific studies and are devoted to intellectual pursuits. It is equally evident that the general diffusion of education will enlarge the circle of this class of persons and extend their influence. And it is quite natural that minds so trained, when their attention is turned to the study of religion, should look for its presentation under scientific forms. This expectation is not to be censured or thwarted; on the contrary, it should be met with due consideration and fairly satisfied. For the claim which Christianity lays upon man is that of a "reasonable service," and, unless it can make this demand good in the court of reason, it must lose its hold upon his intelligence, cease to exert its influence upon society, and give up the idea of ever winning the homage of the whole human race.

And it was precisely this scientific presentation of Christianity with the aid of philosophy that was aimed at, and in great part achieved, by the Schoolmen. "For it is due to the service of philosophy that sacred theology take up and enrich itself with the nature, habit, and genius of a true science." * Before their day positive theology, which consisted in proving the divinity of Christianity by the authority of the inspired Scriptures and the words of Christ delivered to His apostles and handed down from generation to generation in His Church with the testimony of the Fathers, had received its completion. This prepared the way for the Schoolmen, who added to the arguments of positive theology those drawn from philosophy. Philosophy, as held by them, consisted in those truths which had been "discovered with the sole light of natural reason by the eminent thinkers of the past," especially by their prince, Aristotle, who reduced these truths into a system, but not unmixed with most serious, not to say appalling, errors. St. Thomas, the prince of the Schoolmen, with the aid derived from the writings of his precursors, especially of St. Dionysius the Areopagite, St. Augustine, Boëthius, St. Anselm, Blessed Albert the Great his master, and above all from the light of his

* Leo XIII., Encyclical *Æterni Patris.*

own incomparable and sanctified genius, eliminated these errors, and at the same time modified, enlarged, and enriched with his own ideas the boundaries and scope of philosophy.

The aim of the Schoolmen was to produce, by the full play of the light of natural reason on the intellectual side of Christianity, aided by philosophy and consistently with positive theology, a strictly logical demonstration of Christianity. The great task which they had before them was that of the synthesis of natural and revealed truth, of science and faith. But there came a halt in the march of this intellectual progress.

In the early part of the sixteenth century earnest and zealous efforts were made by sincere churchmen to reform the evils and extirpate the abuses existing in the Church, more especially in Germany. By certain leaders whose passions swayed their judgments, combined with temporal princes who made use of these to gain despotic power, this most praiseworthy movement was turned from that of reform into one of heresy, schism, and revolution. Seized with the insane idea of destroying the Church which Christ had built, they conspired together and organized a systematic opposition, protesting defiantly against her doctrines, and rudely overturning, wherever they succeeded in gaining the power, what she had

with great difficulty reared and with greater sacrifices sustained.

Consistently with the fundamental principle of their system of confining the attention exclusively to the Bible, and the interpretation of its texts by the sole light of the internal illumination of the Holy Spirit, they denied the value of human reason, contemned philosophy, opposed the spread of education and the study of the liberal arts and sciences, burnt up or sold as waste paper precious manuscripts, depopulated the schools and universities, and shattered to pieces, wherever they came within their reach, all works of art.

Hence Melanchthon, the learned scholar, imbued with this fanaticism, abandoned his studies, apprenticed himself to a baker in order not to distract his attention with human learning from the internal workings of the Holy Spirit. Every ignorant peasant might consistently entertain the fancy that he was called to be a preacher of the Gospel—as many did—and that he was even all the better fitted to become a preacher of the Gospel by very reason of his crass ignorance. This original characteristic trait of contempt for all human learning and culture survives here and there among Protestant sects even to our own day, more notably among the Society of Friends, the Methodists, and the Plymouth Brethren. This reaction

against intellectual activity and denial of progress properly named itself Protestantism.

It has taken the greater part of three centuries for the body of those who have been infected by this contagion to throw off its effects, and to regain their intellectual and moral health sufficiently to walk again erect. This state of convalescence upon which the better part of the descendants of original Protestantism have entered has taken place by the intellect slowly assimilating those truths which the leaders of this secession from the Church denied, and in rejecting their principal errors. For the intellect, according to its own laws, as Sir Thomas teaches, seeks truth, assimilates it when found, and has a natural abhorrence of error, and, when once detected, rejects it. Thus the Protestantism of the nineteenth century, or what goes now pretty much by that name, is the reverse of the Protestantism of the sixteenth century.

The process of this transformation has been somewhat as follows: The truths of divine revelation and of human reason against which a protest was made in the beginning, have been placed in such a clear light by long and frequent discussion that further controversy about them in our day is hardly possible. Where will you find an intelligent man among Protestants who could be

induced to repeat Martin Luther's diatribes against human reason? or against man's free-will? or against human nature? How many Presbyterians of this generation hold and believe the five points of Calvinism pure and simple? The same might be said with equal truth of Episcopalians and the Thirty-nine Articles of Anglicanism. Very few among Protestants of this century take the pains to read their creeds, and those who do, and get an idea of their contents, either clamor for their change or would smile at the simplicity of one who seriously asked whether they believed in them. Even the human sciences appear to have had for their mission, especially since their revival in our times, to undermine the positions assumed by Protestantism in its attacks on the Catholic Church, and the drift of their real discoveries harmonizes with Catholic philosophy and theology.* This confirms the truth of the teaching of St. Thomas, who says that "the study of creation tends to the destruction of error and the fortifying of the truths of divine faith."† Every forward step in the sciences is a conquest of truth, and as the supernatural finds its confirmation in the natural,

* Those of our readers who would follow this train of thought we advise to read the volume entitled *Contemporary Evolution*, by St. George Mivart.

† *Contra Gentiles*, lib. ii. c. ii., iii.

so every advance in the natural sciences is a new conquest of Catholicity over heresy. It is from this point of view we can fully appreciate the affirmation of Leo XIII., that "*Christ is the Restorer of the sciences.*" *

So thoroughly have the principal errors of Protestantism been exposed that few, if any, can be found who could witness without impatience and disgust the killing for the hundredth time these "extinct Satans." Old issues are abandoned, the Protestantism of creeds lies at death's door, and those of the next generation who have not become Catholics, if they can still be called Protestants, may perhaps retain a general respect for the Christian religion, but little beyond that.

Even unbelievers frankly acknowledge: "Granting that God Almighty came upon earth to found a religious system, they would be at loss to make out where such a system is to be found, if not in the Church of Rome." † Others who fancy that they are emancipated from the Christian faith, occupying themselves with the futile attempt to impeach Christianity with ideals borrowed unwittingly from its stores, publicly confess that once you concede the Messianic idea—another phrase for the divinity of Christ—the Catholic Church is undoubtedly the complete embodi-

* Encyc. *Æterni Patris.* † *Westminster Review*, July, 1872.

ment and exponent of the Christian religion. The fact has become plain at last that Protestantism affords no longer any shelter for thoroughly intelligent and upright men to call themselves Christians or to escape becoming Catholics.

Seeing this has compelled certain refractory and self-sufficient persons to make the attempt to invent a new religion as a substitute for Christianity; while, with keener insight, another class proclaims the utter hopelessness, not to say ridiculousness, of the sporadic efforts of these deluded men to accomplish their self-imposed task, and, recognizing the fact that there is no real alternative between the Catholic Church and atheism, they openly avow themselves atheists.

These, however, compose but a small number; the larger part of the body of Protestants have a more healthy tone, which is indicated by their willingness to listen to the genuine voice of reason, their enthusiasm for the general diffusion of education and their sacrifices in favor of the higher branches of studies, their love for the fine arts and pursuit of the natural sciences, their instinctive attachment to liberty and desire for progress—these, and other signs of the same nature, are all proofs of the early stages of recovery of that intellectual and moral activity which is the true standard of man's normal health. Therefore,

to all whose eyes are not blurred and whose ears are not deaf, it is plain that the main tendencies of the times in which we live are moving the souls of men with increased rapidity and growing harmony towards the great truths of the Catholic faith.

Is not this interpretation of the signs of the times in accordance with the intention and significance of the invitation of the reigning pontiff, Leo XIII., to the Catholic world to turn its attention to the study of the Schoolmen, especially St. Thomas, with the view of completing, with the assistance of all our modern scientific resources, the noble work of the evolution on rational principles of the truths of the Catholic faith?

Pius IX. fearlessly placed before the eyes of the world the evil tendencies of the age, at the same time condemning its errors and vices, in the hope of saving society from being plunged into an unfathomable abyss. Leo XIII., his worthy successor, has been given, let us hope, the more consoling mission of pointing out to the world the good tendencies of the age, interpreting its truths and virtues in that light which will make the way clear to society of a loftier and better future.

The whole drift of the foregoing might be

summed up in these words: If an exposition of the Catholic religion were made, following the efforts of the Schoolmen, especially St. Thomas, profiting at the same time by the knowledge, discoveries, and experience since acquired, in the light of such a presentment the prejudices against the Catholic faith would disappear, its beauty would find unbidden entrance into the hearts of men, the religious revolution of the sixteenth century would be reversed, and humanity as one man would advance with rapid strides to bring down the kingdom of heaven upon earth, and, in so doing, fit itself for its loftier and ampler destiny above.

Assuming, then, the fact, which many among themselves frankly acknowledge, that Protestantism as an organized opposition to the Catholic Church has spent its main strength, and as an adequate representation of Christianity is an utter failure, is doomed to disappear, and is disappearing rapidly; assuming that in the eyes of intelligent men the efforts to invent or construct a new religion are unworthy a moment of serious thought; and granting that "the problem of problems of this hour" is, as Mr. Tyndall has put it in his Bristol address, "how to yield the religious sentiment reasonable satisfaction," the question then immediately before us is this:

What prospect is there that the Catholic religion will solve this problem of problems?

This is the question with which we started out, and insisted on being frankly met and fairly answered. Religion, Christianity, the Catholic Church—which is Christianity in its unity and totality in a concrete form—has for its actual task to answer satisfactorily the intellectual demands of the age, and to perceive its opportunities in modern civilization and its onward tendencies.

The Catholic Church, so far from shrinking from this precise problem and these imperative demands, hails them with inmost delight. She is not only ready to face them fearlessly, but, conscious of the indwelling divinity and the possession of divine truth, she looks upon this problem and these demands as the very opportunities prepared by her Divine Spouse to secure, by her satisfactory solution and answers, a new and glorious triumph.

This is what we shall now attempt to show.

Here at the outset we are met with an objection: Your vital dogma is obedience to the pope. Authority is your main reliance for moving men's hearts and illuminating their minds. How, then, can you expect by such means to bring home the difficult truths and practices of

Christianity to the souls of men born and bred in the freedom of this age? In answer we affirm that this objection is owing to distorted ideas and wrong opinions current among Protestants concerning the doctrines, the sacraments, the worship, and the discipline of the Catholic Church, and from a misconception of the history of the Church since the Reformation. Comte de Maistre, in his usual emphatic style, did not hesitate to characterize the history written during these three last centuries as a general conspiracy against truth. There is no doubt that this accusation is to a great extent just. But is not this falsification due, in some measure at least, to the fact that in an age of active religious controversy one is apt to fix his attention upon those truths or virtues which are in dispute, even to the exclusion of others equally important and perhaps more essential, but which are not contested? The former are quite naturally, in the heat of the contest, unduly accentuated; and the latter quite left out of sight and, it would appear, almost forgotten. Occasion is thus given to narrow-minded and unfair opponents to select these contested points, forge from them a caricature, and impose, with a certain show of learning, this monster of their own imagination upon the ignorant as the Catholic Church. These controversialists play the part

in ecclesiastical matters which the Trollopes and Dickenses did in their one-sided descriptions of our people and in their estimate of our popular institutions, and the best that can be said of them is that they fed the prejudices of their countrymen and for a short time relieved their spleen by affording them a little merriment.

It is not from the knowledge of her true character that the Catholic religion suffers in the minds of a large portion of the non-Catholic community, but from the false impressions which they have received. But the crisis of the fever of controversy is passing away, a change is coming over people's minds, and there is reason to hope that if the Catholic religion were presented to their attention without exaggerations, and in the light of its real character, the more impartial and intelligent minds would assimilate this knowledge. At least, the experiment is worth trying, and for our purpose we will take up the objection above referred to, which may be called the root of the religious controversy of these last three centuries—the burning question of authority.

The impression has been made on the minds of no inconsiderable portion of the non-Catholic community that the Catholic religion is one based exclusively upon an external authority which finds its absolute expression in the commands of the

pope; and if obedience is not the sole virtue of a good Catholic, it is at least the one above all others put in practice by the Catholic system. And it may be asked: Have not learned authors and distinguished controversialists given countenance to this false impression by fixing their attention wholly, it would seem, upon the evils of rebellion against the authority of the Church of Christ, as is shown by their declaration that the essence of religion, of Christianity, of Catholicity is authority; and in the assertion that on becoming Catholic one has to make an entire surrender, in religious matters, of his personal liberty and his own will; and much more in the same strain?

But there is much to be said in extenuation of, if not justification for, thus presenting Christianity under the exclusive form of an external authority; for a wise strategist makes his point of defence that against which the attacks of the enèmy are mainly directed. Now, the attacks of the enemies of the Church for the last three hundred years were aimed against all external authority in religion, even though divinely appointed; hence the reason for strenuously insisting upon and emphasizing the necessity of authority. It might also be said, further, that when an exaggerated or false idea of liberty has penetrated into the minds of a numerous class of men, loosened the bonds

which held them together in society, excited disturbances, and caused revolutions, it behooves the friends of order, progress, and civilization to drive home the conviction of the necessity of authority, to define and concentrate its powers, to insist upon the practice of the virtue of obedience and make it conspicuous. To all this it may be added, in favor of external authority and obedience, that there are individuals, and even the larger portion of the human race perhaps—certainly this applies to some races—whose highest contentment in religion, and, as for that, in their social and political relations, is not so much from convictions arising from intrinsic evidence as in the exercise of obedience to an external authority. The knowledge of truth and their duty is never conveyed to the minds of these individuals or races of men so satisfactorily as when under the form of an external authority whose claims commend themselves to their intelligence, and which is venerable by its great antiquity. How perfect must be their satisfaction in finding themselves in possession of a religion like the Catholic, which unites in itself all the authorities of past centuries and all the ancient traditions of the human race from its cradle!

Finally, what was more natural than the appeal made to the external authority of the Holy Scrip-

tures?—the validity of which both parties in the controversy that we are now treating accepted, and therefore it seemed to them the shortest and best way of settling their disputes.

But, granting the worthiness of motives, the grievous evils flowing from disobedience, and the suitableness of presenting Christianity to a people of certain characteristics under the form of external authority, it may well be asked, Is not a different method necessary when face to face with race-traits of an opposite kind?

Those who represent the Catholic religion mainly from the point of view of authority appear not to be aware of the fact that there is a large class of men, not to say whole nations and races of men, who are sensitive, over-sensitive perhaps, to the exercise of any authority outside of themselves in religious matters, or, as for that, in any matters whatsoever; men who are instinctively inclined to look upon every act of such an authority, legitimate or not, as an attack upon their personal liberty, to which they are irresistibly attached; men who are inclined to think that that religion which relies chiefly, if not solely, upon its authority must teach doctrines contrary to reason and proclaim precepts repugnant to the best impulses of our nature, or why, they ask, does it require the force of an external authority to im-

pose these upon our acceptance?—finally, men who, if compelled to make a choice, would a thousand times rather suffer from the license of liberty than the despotism of authority.

When theologians or ecclesiastical authors venture to treat of Christianity as to its essence or nature, and aim at presenting it to a people unlike their own, they should bear in mind what are its real constitutive principles, and be careful not to employ language that is open to an interpretation the reverse of their real meaning. To declare, then, that the essence of Christianity is authority, and on becoming a Christian one must entirely surrender his personal liberty and his own will, is a great mistake, and, we were about to say, an unpardonable one. For whatever attractions authority may have in the eyes of a large portion of mankind, however absurd it may be to attack an authority directly and divinely appointed, and however great may be the evils of rebellion, no provocation should lead one in his defence of Christianity, or in his zeal for its propagation, to present it in so one-sided an aspect.

It is an error, and a gross one, to declare that the essence of Christianity is authority. It is no such thing. Authority never was and never can be the essence of anything, much less the essence of the highest and best of all things—

religion. The essence of Christianity is the elevation of rational creatures, by the power of the Holy Spirit, to a union with God above that which they enjoy by their birth. Thus religion communicates to man's soul the indwelling Holy Spirit, who superadds to the relation man received from his Maker in the act of creation one that makes him a participator in the divine nature and which transforms him from a creature into a child of God. This is the essence of Christianity in its relation to man.

Authority is always secondary to something else as its end, and never an end in itself. Hence authority may be defined in its most general sense as a power subservient to the end for which men are associated together. Thus parental authority is subservient to the proper rearing and education of children. Political authority is subservient to the securing of the general welfare of a people. The authority of the Church is subservient to the attainment of the end for which the Christian religion was revealed—that is, the promotion and safeguard of the action of the indwelling Holy Spirit by which the soul is united to God. Therefore it may be laid down as an axiom of Christianity that the outward authority of the Church effaces itself in a direct ratio to the action of the Holy Spirit within the soul.

As to the assertion that in accepting the invitation of the Church to become a Catholic one must, in religious matters, make an entire surrender of his personal liberty and his own will, this sentence requires no little explanation to understand whatever truth it may contain; and it is not quite certain that a correct meaning can be attached to it—certainly not as it stands.

"Personal liberty and one's own will" constitute an essential part of our nature, and these faculties are not ours to surrender, if such a surrender were possible or desirable. Were this act in man's power it would then be possible for him to annihilate himself. Again, this act of surrender always supposes the persistent action of the faculties surrendered; a surrender of this sort is therefore as impossible as it is absurd. Once more, personal liberty and one's own will constitute man a rational, responsible being, and an invitation to a surrender of them is an insult offered to manhood and dignity, and ought to be treated as such. Catholicity, which is the name for concrete Christianity, makes no such impossible, absurd, and degrading invitation to men. Her martyrs, rather than make such a surrender, voluntarily underwent the cruellest torments and cheerfully suffered the most ignominious deaths.

Christianity violates no law of our being, asks

no surrender of our faculties, and is in perfect harmony with all the genuine instincts of our nature. Christianity is truth, and invites men to exercise their faculties in search after truth, and, when found, to follow the truth and emancipate themselves from all servitude. "You shall know the truth," so runs the Master's promise, "and the truth shall make you free." This is Catholicity, and such, too, is its explication by St. Thomas.*

Were we to clothe the invitation of the Catholic Church to men of this age with words, it would run somewhat thus: O men, prone by nature to seek knowledge! seek earnestly to know, and to know all things visible and invisible, above all the Sovereign Truth, to the uttermost of your faculties, for it is unto this end your Creator bestowed them upon you. Exert your will to gain all the good possible in every order of being, above all the Supreme Good; your appetites and aspirations were given for no other end. Maintain your personal liberty, cost what it may; the cost cannot be too great to preserve such a divine treasure. God does not ask of you to surrender your nature or its faculties, for these are fresh from His hands; but to "go on with the same limbs that clad you at your birth to blessedness."

* *Summa*, I. 2, art. cvii., cviii.

We see in history how the different eras of the Church were characterized by special adaptations of divine truth and by the practice of particular virtues. To be a Christian in the ages of persecution was equivalent, in most cases, to martyrdom; subsequently, in order to keep one's self pure and unspotted from the world, the deserts were peopled with Christians; but as persecution ceased and pagan society was transformed by Christianity, so the prominence of martyrdom and retirement from the world ceased to characterize the Christian life. Unquestionably there are epochs whose prevalent errors and vices require of Christians the practice of special virtues to counteract them and to be faithful to God and their consciences, and the practice of these virtues at times even to an heroic degree. But it would be a misapprehension of the true idea of Christianity, and a misplaced zeal, to insist upon the practice, for instance, of poverty or that of blind obedience, as it is called, or any other of the lesser Christian virtues, as necessary to salvation for all Christians and in all times, or even as the exclusively proper form and adequate exhibition of Christian perfection.

No one can dispute that the Holy Spirit inspires a number of souls to give themselves to the preaching of the particular truths and the

practice of the particular virtues necessary to counteract the errors and vices of certain epochs. These favored souls do great service to the Church of God both by their zeal and their example to the faithful; the history of the different religious orders from the early ages of Christianity, approved and sanctioned by the Church, places this beyond doubt. It is no less true that religious perfection is an integral part of the eternal Gospel of Jesus Christ; but religious institutions and their peculiar forms of acquiring this perfection are adapted to the peculiar needs of their times and other special circumstances. When they have answered the principal needs which called them forth they still continue to exist, and to be serviceable in many ways, but not as the most active and efficient agents of the Church for meeting the pressing wants of the hour. The Church alone is the immortal bride of Christ; but she brings forth at every period children like giants ready to run their course. Herein lies the secret of the succession of her eminent pontiffs, her founders of great religious orders, and her saints both men and women.

But it may be asked: Does not the invitation of the Gospel require of all men who would enter into eternal life to surrender the *perversion* of their personal liberty and to renounce what is called

their *self*-will? Most assuredly it does, and this will be found written on almost every page of the Gospels. If this be your meaning, why not use language that will convey your thought to those whom you address? The time has come to use words in their truest sense, and he who would gain the men of this generation must address their intelligence, acknowledge their liberty, and respect their dignity.

May not the pushing forward external authority, often when quite out of place, be one of the principal causes why there exists in the non-Catholic community such a wide-spread sympathy, both open and secret, for every attempt at resistance to ecclesiastical authority? A specific prolonged beyond reason may produce a worse disease than the one removed, and end in killing the patient. May not the prominence given to the practice of obedience, forcing it, so to speak, to cover ground which it cannot occupy or defend, have contributed in part to that spiritual mediocrity among the faithful concerning which there is so common a complaint? Men, to be strong, robust, and active, need food that is not lacking in nutrition. All honor, indeed, to the champions of truth without whose heroic labors its victory over error would not have been, humanly speaking, achieved! Thanks to their resistance to the at-

tacks of error, truths and virtues of great importance, and which otherwise would have lain latent, have been brought to the front. It is principally owing to their zeal that the way has been opened for the Church to return to her accustomed orbit, and to enter upon a course which will be characterized by spontaneity, expansion, individual initiative, and energetic action. But the mission of vanquishing heresy and rebellion was of its nature a transitory one, and a wise physician diminishes both the size and the frequency of his doses when the patient is in a state of convalescence, and recommends a more generous diet.

Let us now suppose, as the smoke of the successful battle with heresy vanishes from the field, that the truths brought forth so conspicuously in this conflict were properly adjusted, like the one we have taken as an illustration, and we shall perceive what is meant by the resumption and completion of the great task of the Schoolmen. If this were accomplished, and the Catholic Church were seen in the light of such a fair presentment, the false impressions and the prejudices springing from them would disappear from the minds of men as the mist yields before the light of the rising sun; their intelligence would seize hold instinctively of its divine truths, and mankind,

lifted as it were by one wave of intelligence and joy, would pursue with happier zeal its great end.

Nor is this a pleasant word-picture drawn by effort of the imagination; it is the representation of the Catholic Church in her true light, and, as a proof of its truth and reality, we dare appeal to the unanimous testimony and to the consciousness of all well-informed Catholics. It was in this light St. Augustine, that lofty genius, beheld the Catholic Church when he exclaimed: "Too late have I known thee, O ancient truth! Too late have I loved thee, O beauty ancient and ever new!"

Let him, therefore, who would serve the Catholic Church in this generation, show her in her own true light, in her unity and universality, in all her beauty and majesty. It is this true vision of her divinity that will captivate man's intelligence, secure the unbidden homage of his will, and elicit his most heroic devotedness. Herein lies the mysterious force of her duration for so many centuries, the secret of the power of her sway over more than two hundred millions of souls, and the reason for the never-broken stream of her converts and the capture of the ablest and noblest minds of our century.

Let us once more resume and close. If the

interior and intelligible side of the Church were exposed to view in such a light that men would be led to see clearly and appreciate her essential character; if it were shown unmistakably that all her externals, when not abused or exaggerated, are strictly subservient to the securing of her essential end—union of the soul with God—there are better and stronger reasons to hope for a tide to set in towards her fold in the nineteenth century than there was to leave it in the sixteenth. For such a movement has in its favor the aim and power of the Holy Spirit, the noblest aspiration of man's soul—that for common brotherhood—and the operation of that law of unity which reigns throughout all creation.

The providence of God in the course of events appears to be preparing for such a movement by lifting the Church out of the cradle of that race which has served her from her infancy, and in breaking the swathing bands of princes which protected her tender limbs, in order to clothe His divine spouse with the vesture of youth, and to place her in all her attractiveness before the eyes of men, so that in beholding her divine beauty they may be carried away with joy and delight. The same Providence is so directing the issues of the world, the movements of nations, the intellectual, moral, social, and political needs

of society, that the necessity of her divine action and aid is seen more and more plainly and felt more keenly; while, on the other hand, the enemy of mankind, in spite of himself, is driving those who will not be moved by higher motives, by their fears of common dangers, unless they are atheists or anarchists, into the fold of the Church.

As to Catholics, the controversies of the day will invite them to the scientific statement of their faith, for only the intelligent grasp of the truth in its entireness is adequate to meet the formidable attacks and conquer the numerous errors of our age. Catholics are left no choice. They must either raise up their thoughts and courage above race and nation, and to the height of the aims of Christianity as the absolute and universal religion destined to gain the entire world, or cease to be Catholics, and content themselves to take the ignoble part of one among the thousand different religious sects, and with them finally disappear and be forgotten.

But such a supposition is a sin against the idea of a Divine Providence, a denial of the divinity of Christianity, and is infidelity to the best instincts of our nature. Our hearts are therefore lifted upward, and our hopes are onward; for the great Church which civilized and

Christianized Europe, formed its people into nations, and into one great Christian family properly named Christendom, is fully competent to do the same work, and with greater ease considering modern facilities and appliances at her disposal, for the whole world.

# VIII.

# THE EXPERIMENT OF PROTESTANTISM.

THE celebration of the fourth centennial of Luther's birth-day is a noteworthy event. Especially noteworthy, since the enterprise of substituting another foundation for that upon which Christ Himself had placed His Gospel, begun at the Diet of Worms by Dr. Martin Luther, has proven an unsuccessful experiment. For it is evident now to the whole world that the faith of his followers in Christianity grows fainter and fainter. This is conspicuously true of the children of the cradle of Protestantism, his own countrymen, who are notorious for their indifference to Christianity. There is scarcely any one doctrine held as of Christian faith by the father of the Reformation that his offspring have not re-

pudiated, or are not prepared to repudiate on the first convenient occasion. They treat Luther's doctrines with the same courtesy with which he treated the doctrines of the Catholic Church. The more active intellect of Protestantism everywhere to-day questions not so much this or that doctrine of Christianity as why they are Christians at all! They are for the most part convinced that Protestant principles furnish no solid reasons why they should be Christians. There are so-called orthodox Protestant sects which are willing to receive as members of their churches persons who make no profession of any doctrines of a distinctive Christian character whatever.

Thinking and religious men who feel an uncontrollable reluctance to give up the Christian religion begin to ask if it be not necessary to defend its divine claims on Catholic principles. Not a few of this class, finding, on mature investigation, this to be the fact, reverse the religious revolutionary movement of the sixteenth century by becoming Catholic. The alternative now staring intelligent Protestants in the face is this: either they must enter into the fold of the Catholic Church to remain Christians, or become agnostics, which is a mild word for atheists. The foundations designed by Dr. Martin Luther for Christianity, after three long centuries of experience,

have crumbled away entirely, notwithstanding there are Christians, apparently intelligent, who celebrate with unusual *éclat* the fourth centennial birth-day of the pseudo-Reformer!

"Luther's appearance before the Diet of Worms," so writes Mr. Froude, "is one of the finest, if not the very finest scene in human history." His view of this scene is correct, if "to cleave a creed into sects, and fool a crowd with glorious lies," is a work worthy of the effort of a true Christian and a sincere lover of his race. But from a Christian point of view the most pitiable spectacle that has happened since the heresiarch Arius denied the divinity of Christ before the Council of Nice was Luther's appearance before the Diet of Worms. What else at bottom was this scene than a crafty attempt to shift the authority of Christ's Church as the divinely authorized interpreter of revealed truth to the questionable suggestions, not to say illusions, of Martin Luther's imagination?—a position which, viewed in its logical consequences and practical results, was an effort, under the plea of a resuscitated and purified Gospel, to undermine the Christian Church, to repudiate the Christian religion, and to deny Christ. If every accused person could change both court and law to suit his purposes, where would there ever be one found guilty? Men might with just alarm ask:

What, in this case, would become of society, what of civilization?

At the Diet of Worms Luther appealed from the jurisdiction of a lawfully-constituted court to the private interpretation of the Scriptures; from the authority of the Church to his own individual judgment. Now, it is a misapprehension common among Protestants to suppose that Catholics, in refusing the appeal of Martin Luther at the Diet of Worms, condemn the use of reason or individual judgment, or whatever one pleases to call that personal act which involves the exercise of man's intellect and free-will. The truth is, personal judgment flows from what constitutes man a rational being, and there is no power under heaven that can alienate personal judgment from man, nor can man, if he would, disappropriate it. The cause of all the trouble at the Diet of Worms was not that of personal judgment, for neither party put that in question. The point in dispute was the right application of personal judgment. Catholics maintained, and always have and always will maintain, that a divine revelation necessitates a divine interpreter. Catholics resisted, and always will resist, on the ground of its incompetency, a human authority applied to the interpretation of the contents of a divinely-revealed religion. They consider such an authority,

whether of the individual or the state, in religious matters as an intrusion. Catholics insist without swerving upon believing in religious matters no one but God!

Let us not be misapprehended on this delicate and most important point. The application of reason to the interpretation of the contents of a divine revelation is one thing. The application of reason to the evidence that God has made a revelation is quite another thing. The use of reason in the first supposition reduces the truths of divine revelation to the truths of reason, and this is rationalism pure. The other use of reason, to investigate and make one's self certain that God has made a revelation, is of obligation and is consistent with Christianity, which proclaims both the truths of reason and truths above the sphere of reason; but these latter, the revealed truths, are to be received solely upon the authority of God, the revealer, who cannot deceive nor be deceived. No rational creature feels any bondage in believing what is above and beyond the grasp of reason upon the veracity of his Creator.

This can be easily shown, and in a few words, by an analysis of the foundation of an act of Catholic faith. The Catholic faith rests upon three elementary facts—the competency of human

reason, the infallibility of the Church, the veracity of God. He who undermines either one of these three positions destroys the Catholic faith. A Catholic who, from lack of sound philosophical principles, doubts the competency of human reason in its own sphere, is bound to hold it upon religious grounds, for he has no other competent voucher than reason for the divine claims of the Catholic Church. This is one of the essential principles of the Catholic Church, that she is accompanied with evidence of her divine character ample to elicit from reason an act of assent which excludes all rational doubt. For since divine revelation springs from a source above the sphere of reason, it necessitates a divinely-authorized and divinely-assisted interpreter and teacher. This is one of the essential functions of the Church, which Christ planned and the Holy Spirit incorporated, and with which Christ promised to remain until the consummation of the world. As to the veracity of God, the third essential element of Catholic faith, this is involved in the very idea of God's existence, which reason is competent to demonstrate. Cleared, then, from all extraneous matter, the main point in dispute between Catholics and Protestants is this: Catholics maintain the necessity of the divine authority of the Church in a revealed religion such

as Christianity; they are opposed to the introduction of human authority, not in reference to the fact as to whether God has made a revelation, but to be exercised upon the contents of revelation.

If you ask how the so-called Reformers could venture to substitute the private judgment of man in the place of the authority of the Church within the sphere of revealed religion, when without exception they held man to be "totally depraved," we reply, in the words of the Protestant historian Guizot, "The Reformation did not fully receive its own principles and their effects." That is, the Reformation was an insult to the common sense of mankind!

This, then, is the rational genesis of the Catholic faith. Without the competency of reason, within its proper sphere, one cannot know with certitude the Church of Christ. Without the divine authority of the Church of Christ men cannot know with certitude all the truths of divine revelation. Without the veracity of God one cannot believe without doubting what God has revealed. An act of Catholic faith includes necessarily each and all of these indubitable sources of truth. Hence when a Catholic makes an act of faith he says: "O my God! I believe without doubting all the truths which the Catholic Church

teaches, because Thou hast revealed them, who canst neither deceive nor be deceived." An act of Catholic faith is the synthetic expression of the highest value of human reason, the greatest dignity of man, the divine character of the Christian religion, and the supreme claims of God upon His rational creatures. Thus Catholics alone can point to their first principles and boldly admit all the consequences which rightly flow from them. Catholics cannot withhold the exercise of their faith without doing violence to the dictates of reason. This agrees with what a celebrated Scotch metaphysician said to some ministers who visited him in his last sickness. "Gentlemen," said he, when they pressed the subject of religion on his attention, "were I a Christian it is not to you I should address myself, but to priests of the Catholic Church; for with them I find premises and conclusion, and this I know you cannot offer."

Another source of misapprehension of the Catholic Church frequent, not to say common, among Protestants is the supposition that its authority is made a substitute for the guidance of the indwelling Holy Spirit. How many Protestants who pass for intelligent persons suppose that to make one's salvation secure as a Catholic all that is required is blindly to follow the

authority of the Church and abandon one's conscience to the direction of her priests! They imagine the Catholic Church is a sort of easy coach, into which one has only to enter in order to be landed without exertion safely within the portals of paradise! Nothing is further from the truth than this idea, for it can easily be shown that the internal guidance of the Holy Spirit is thoroughly maintained and faithfully carried out in the Catholic Church only.

What, then, is Christian perfection, or sanctity, or holiness, according to the Catholic idea? Holiness consists in that state of the soul when it is moved inwardly by the Holy Spirit. Read the lives of her saints, Christian reader, if you desire to see this conception of Christian perfection practically illustrated. What else are the different religious orders and communities which she so carefully provides for her children who feel called by a divine counsel to a life of perfection, than schools wherein the principle of the internal guidance of the Holy Spirit is more practically applied and more strictly carried out than is elsewhere found possible?—spiritual schools in which men and women are rendered, not, as some foolishly fancy, stupid or degraded, or taught to destroy nature, or governed by arbitrary authority, but where souls are trained to follow faithfully

the inspirations of the Holy Spirit; where nature is completed and perfected by the contemplation of its divine Archetype; where men and women, Christian souls, are taught not to be slaves to animal gratifications, but with high minds "to be strengthened by God's Spirit with might unto the inward man."

The Catholic idea of Christian perfection as a system is built up, in all its most minute parts, upon the central conception of the immediate guidance of the soul by the indwelling Holy Spirit. The Catholic Church teaches that the Holy Spirit is infused into the souls of men, accompanied with His heavenly gifts, by the instrumentality of the sacrament of baptism. These are the words of Christ: "Unless a man is born of water and the Holy Spirit he cannot enter into the kingdom of God." Thus a man becomes a child of God, according to the teaching of Christ, not by right of birth, but by the grace of baptism. By the creative act man is made a creature of God; by the indwelling presence of the Holy Spirit man is made a Christian. The Holy Spirit, having taken up His abode in the Christian soul and become its abiding guest, enlightens, quickens, and strengthens it to run in the way of perfection. It is also true that this high estate is attained first by the practice of virtue in bringing

the appetites of man's animal nature under the control of the dictates of reason. It is by the practice of virtue man is rendered, before all, a perfectly rational being. The men who kept under the control of reason the animal propensities of their nature by the practice of virtue illustrate the pagan ideal man. Zoroaster, Gautama, Confucius, Socrates, Plato, Epictetus, Marcus Aurelius, and many other worthies of antiquity attained to a greater or less extent this ideal of man. But Christian souls go far beyond this: by the practice of recollection, prayer, fidelity to divine inspirations, moved and aided by the gifts of the Holy Spirit, they render the dictates of reason submissive, pliant, and docile to the teachings and guidance of the Holy Spirit, until this becomes a habit and, as it were, spontaneous. Thus Christian souls, by the interior action of the Holy Spirit, attain perfection—that is, become divine men! This is the ideal Christian man, the saint!

Here, then, is the key to all the secrets of the economy of the Catholic Church concerning spiritual life. Hence the reception of the sacraments, the exercise of Church authority, and the practice of virtue are never presented as a substitute for, but as subservient to, the immediate guidance of the soul by the indwelling Holy Spirit.

But suppose there is a conflict between the divine external authority of the Church and the inspirations of the abiding Holy Spirit in the soul, what then? To Catholic readers this seems a ridiculous question; but we say to them, Be a little patient; having answered the calumny thus far, let us pursue it to the remotest corners of its concealment. What then? Why, then the reign of nonsense! For if the Holy Spirit acting through the authority of the Church as the teacher and interpreter of divine revelation contradicts the Holy Spirit acting in the soul as its immediate guide, then God contradicts God! Can anything be more absurd than this supposition? It is enough to know that the action of God in the Church and the action of God in the soul never have come and never can come in conflict.

One more question or doubt, and we pass on. For it might be objected that the Catholic Church hitherto described in these pages is the Ideal Christian Church, and not the Roman Catholic Church! To this we reply: The Roman Catholic Church is the Ideal Christian Church in so far as the Ideal Christian Church is not an abstraction but an existing fact, as it must exist, in men, women, and children, such as we are. Blindness to this plain truth is one of the main

reasons why many fail to see the Catholic Church as she is, and entertain so many absurd and foolish notions about popes, priests, and Catholics generally. This blindness is one of the principal causes of the revolt of the sixteenth century, and demands more diffuse treatment, which we will now bestow upon it.

It has already been shown that Christ dwells in His Church as the soul dwells in its body. But it must be borne in mind that the soul is not the body. So Christ is the soul of the Church, but existing in her members, men, women, children, such as we are, ignorant, weak, with propensities and passions leading to the commission of sin unless kept under control. The popes, the cardinals, the bishops of the Catholic Church, and her people, are not angels dropped down suddenly from the skies, but sinners; and they are saved, if saved at all, solely by the grace of God. If St. John, the beloved disciple, could confess with truth, "If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us," how much more we! Our Lord Himself puts into the mouths of His disciples, when teaching them how to pray, this petition: "Forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us." No man prays to be forgiven for what he has not done.

"All the beauty of the king's daughter is with-

in." The human side of the Church is therefore a mixture of good and evil. Christ Himself has compared His Church to a field of wheat in which tares spring up with the wheat. The wheat sown was good, but tares came up also. But how came the tares? "An enemy," said our Lord in reply, "has done this." Shall the tares be separated from the wheat? No, He answers, let them grow together until the harvest time comes. Then the wheat will be garnered up in the barns, and the tares be cast into the fire. This is a picture of the Church. Good Christians are the wheat. They hear the word of God and keep it. They will be garnered into the mansions of paradise. Bad Christians are those who are deaf to the word of God, listen to the tempter, follow their passions. These are the tares, which will be cast into the fire. This is the sifting Christ will not fail to make of the members of His Church at the day of judgment. In the meantime the wheat and tares, good and bad Christians, occupy the same field.

The idea of a church whose members are all saints is an abstraction, and it has never existed upon this earth. It has no record in history, no warrant in Scriptures, and contradicts the prediction of Christ when He said: "Scandals must come." Hence sensible and well-informed persons

are not surprised to find abuses, corruptions, scandals among the members of the Church. No instructed Catholic will hesitate to admit, though with grief and sorrow, that there have been men of evil lives in the Church as popes, as cardinals, as bishops, as priests, as people. He who imagines there ever was a time when the members of the Church upon earth were all angels or saints is a dreamer.

Such a state of things did not exist in Christ's own day. One whom He Himself had chosen to be an apostle was Judas, the traitor. Peter, the prince of the apostles, denied Christ thrice. The Scriptures say that Christ upbraided the eleven because of their incredulity and hardness of heart: "they did not believe those who had seen Him after He had risen."

Such a state of things did not exist in apostolic times. St. Paul says that there were sins committed by the Corinthian Christians "the like of which was not among the heathens." Among his own perils he counts those from "false brethren." Again, he writes: "Ye have heard that Antichrists shall come: even now there are many Antichrists." The sect of Ebionites, which existed in his day, denied the divinity of Christ, looked upon Paul as an apostate, and rejected all the gospels except that of St. Matthew. There were

those who called themselves Christians in apostolic times, and who protested against the doctrines of the Church; some denied her authority, others proclaimed themselves to be the true church.

Such a state of the Church did not exist in the fourth century, when the divinity of Christ was controverted and denied by the Arians. This error was embraced by entire nations; kings, emperors, priests, bishops, patriarchs held it; ecclesiastical assemblies declared Arianism to be the true faith. Constantine, the first Christian emperor, banished Athanasius, the champion of the orthodox faith. But did the Church succumb? Not at all! Conflict with error, abuses, and disorders is the lot of the Church of Christ upon earth. It is for this reason she is called the militant Church. Those who look upon the primitive Church as the ideal Church, exempt from abuses and corruptions, only display their ignorance of ecclesiastical history. As in the past, so in the present, her enemies will be made to serve her cause. When the Church is disfigured by calumny she becomes better known; when wounded she conquers; when most destitute of all human help she is most powerfully aided by God.

The Church of Christ on the divine side is always perfect, on the human side always imperfect.

This is why reform in the Church is always in order, separation never!

The nature of the Church being understood, we can now take another step and ask: Shall we find errors, abuses, and corruptions in the Church in the sixteenth century? Evidently there must have been. It would be the greatest of all marvels if there had not been such. But were the evils of that period worse, more crying, than at some other periods? This is a grave and most pertinent question, and, lest our answer should be suspected, we will let a Protestant of our day, well versed in history, answer this question in his own words. "It is not true," so says M. Guizot in his *History of European Civilization*, "that in the sixteenth century abuses, properly so called, were more numerous, more crying, than they had been at other times." To obtain a correct idea of the condition of the Church at this epoch let us set down naught in malice, but look the truth squarely in the face, and also extenuate nothing. The principal evils then complained of were the following: too great a diffusion of indulgences; plurality of ecclesiastical offices; irregularity of the lives of ecclesiastics; corruptions of the Roman court. There will rest no doubt upon the mind of an impartial person that these evils did then exist, if

he will take the time and pains to read the letters of the popes, the decrees of the councils, provincial and general, and the lives of the saints of this period, say from the fourteenth to the sixteenth century inclusive.

One step more. Had the Church within herself the means to reform these abuses and evils, or was it necessary to go outside her pale to accomplish this desired purpose? It would be a pity if the Church could not reform herself, for in that case she would be less wisely organized than the state. Every properly-organized state provides itself with the means for the reform of any evils which may spring up within its own body, without necessitating recourse to revolution. Such was the foresight and care of the fathers of our republic that they not only provided means for reform, but even for the change, or even abolition, of the form of our political system by a two-thirds vote of the States. They acted upon the intention of removing all reasonable excuse for revolution. Now, Christ, who knew what was in man and foresaw the scandals that must arise—can it be supposed for a moment that He acted with less prudence, sagacity, and wisdom? It was in view of this that the late Bishop Dupanloup said: "The Church is the only society upon earth where revolution is never necessary and reform is always possible."

What were the means provided by her Founder to bring about reforms? First, her pontiffs. Second, her providential men and women—her saints. Third, her councils, national and general. These latter gave birth, if M. Guizot is to be considered an authority, to modern representative political governments. But were these means employed in the Church at this period? A general council, the Council of Trent, was called in 1545. What kind of men composed it—were they intelligent, earnest lovers of truth, and sincere in their desire for the reform of abuses? Here are the words of the English historian Hallam on this very point: "No general council," says Hallam, "ever contained so many persons of eminent learning as that of Trent; nor is there any ground for believing that any other ever investigated questions before it with so much patience, acuteness, and desire of truth. The early councils, unless they are greatly belied, would not bear comparison in these characteristics." One thing is historical: the reform inaugurated by the decrees of the Council of Trent was radical and complete—so much so that the abuses then complained of ceased to exist. "The decrées of the Council of Trent," says the Protestant German historian Ranke, "were received by the spiritual princes of the empire, and from this moment began a new life for the Catholic Church in

Germany." During the same period providential men and women labored incessantly in the different countries in Europe for the purification of the Church. We give a list of these; though incomplete, it is sufficient to show that there has scarcely been an epoch in the whole history of the Church when she could exhibit an equal galaxy of great men and great women—we mean great saints!

SAINTS OF THE SIXTEENTH CENTURY.

*Spain.*

St. Ignatius,
St. Francis Xavier,
St. Francis Borgia,
St. Teresa,
St. John of the Cross,
St. Peter of Alcantara,
St. Thomas of Villanova,
St. Lewis Bertrand,
St. Paschal Baylon,
St. Francis of Solano,
B. Peter Claver,
St. Joseph Calasanctius of the Pious Schools.

*France.*

St. Jane, Queen,
St. Jane Frances of Chantal,
St. Vincent of Paul,
St. Francis of Sales,
St. Francis Regis.

*Germany.*

B. Peter Fabre,
B. Peter Canisius.

*Italy.*

St. Pius V.,
St. Philip Neri,
St. Felix of Cantalice,
St. Aloysius,
St. Jerome Emiliani,
St. Catherine of Genoa,
St. Charles Borromeo,
B. Charles Spinola,
B. Lawrence of Brindisi,
B. John Marinoni,
St. Andrew Avellino,
St. Camillus of Lelli,
St. Mary Magdalen of Pazzi,
B. Sebastian Valfré.
St. Leonard of Port Maurice,
St. Catherine of Ricci,
St. Cajetan,
B. Hippolytus Gallantini, Congregation of Christian Doctrine,
St. Francis of Paula, of the Minims of Calabria.

*Holland—Martyrs of Gorcum.*
Nicholas Pieck,
Jerome Werdt,
Antony Werdt,
Thierry Van Emden,
Willehad Danus,
Godfrey Mervel,
Antony Hoornaer,
Francis De Roye,
Cornelius Wyk,
Peter Assche,
Father John,
Adrian Beek,
Godfrey Van Duynen,
Adrian Wouters,
James Lacop,
John Oosterwyk,
Leonard Vechel,
Nicholas Van Peppel.

*Portugal.*
St. John of God,
Bartholomew of the Martyrs.

*Poland.*
St. Stanislas,
St. Josaphat.

*America.*
St. Rose of Lima,
St. Alphonsus Toribio, Archbishop of Lima.

*England.*
Thomas More,
John Fisher,
Edmund Campion, and the other martyrs under Henry VIII. and Elizabeth.

And now a word as to the supreme pontiffs of the Catholic Church. Because a man is called to occupy the chair of St. Peter he is not for that reason a great saint. A man may be a pope and his life be far from what it ought to be as a good Christian, and, above all, what it ought to be as one occupying so exalted a place in the church of God. Not all popes have been, like St. Peter, martyrs or saints, but a large number of them have been. The line of popes has been composed of men who, for greatness, virtue, intelligence, are far above any other line of rulers which can be named in the history of mankind.

This is no boast, but sober truth admitted by competent and non-Catholic authorities. Leo X., who was pope at the period under consideration, was, according to men able to form a good judgment, more brilliant as a prince than as a Christian pontiff. Notwithstanding this, a Protestant, Roscoe, wrote an eulogistic biography of Leo X., and non-Catholic writers of history have spoken of him and his pontificate with praise; yet Catholics remember his career with feelings of sadness rather than those of gratification. But it is the remark of Ranke "that since his time the lives of the popes have all been above reproach."

What, then, was the occasion Luther laid hold of to break with the Catholic Church? Pope Leo X. proclaimed an indulgence which was made known in Germany by a Dominican friar named Tetzel. Tetzel was a man of zeal, well versed in theology and gifted with eloquence. The people came in crowds to hear him and to gain the indulgence. Doubtless then, as now, there were Catholics who were more intent upon gaining the benefits of the indulgence than upon the dispositions which it required. This need excite no surprise, for then, as now, many people neglected to be instructed in their religion; then, as now, there were priests who neglected to instruct their people.

Germany in Luther's time was in an uneasy state.

The indulgence proclaimed by Leo X. was looked upon as an abuse, particularly so by the secular princes, who, with their empty purses, saw with feelings of reluctance money taken from the pockets of their German subjects and employed in building churches in Italy. Luther's voice was now heard in attacking indulgences and crying out for reform! Reform was undoubtedly needed. All the sincere and earnest Christians of that day were in sympathy with this cry. Luther's position at that juncture of affairs was the right one. Listen to the letter which he wrote in 1519 to the then reigning pontiff, Leo X.:

"That the Roman Church," he says, "is more honored by God than all others is not to be doubted. St. Peter and St. Paul, forty-six popes, some hundreds of thousands of martyrs, have laid down their lives in its communion, having overcome hell and the world; so that the eyes of God rest on the Roman Church with special favor. Though nowadays everything is in a wretched state, it is no ground for separating from the Church. On the contrary, the worse things are going, the more should we hold close to her, for it is not by separating from the Church we can make her better. We must not separate from God on account of any work of the devil, nor cease to have fellowship with the children of God who are still

abiding in the pale of Rome, on account of the multitude of the ungodly. There is no sin, no amount of evil, which should be permitted to dissolve the bond of charity or break the bond of unity of the body. For love can do all things, and nothing is difficult to those who are united."

This letter has the true ring in it. The only position worthy of a true Christian and sincere reformer is within the Church. Separation from the Church is not reform. To stand up in God's Church and to cry out for reform of real abuses and scandals, fired with genuine zeal and pure love for the beauty of Christ's spouse, is a noble attitude. Such zeal, such love, is capable of doing all things. Had Martin Luther fought it out on this line the name of Luther of Eisleben, the Augustinian friar, would have been handed down with benediction and praise among such great names as Hildebrand, Bernard of Clairvaux, Borromeo of Milan, and other true reformers, to all future generations.

But one is filled with astonishment in reading so strong and unanswerable a testimonial in favor of the Roman Church, and that from the pen of Martin Luther, and written in the year of our Lord 1519. Did he write it? One would scarcely credit the fact, were it not found in the *History of the Reformation* by that partisan, Merle

d'Aubigné. Martin Luther wrote it; was he an imbecile or a knave? Ignorant he was not.

From a reformer Martin Luther became a religious revolutionist; can you, honest reader, tell the reason for this change? Re-examine the event and see, on sound, rational, Christian principles, if you can.

# IX.

# PROTESTANTISM VS. THE CHURCH.

AMONG the causes which have affected the development of Christianity in modern times the religious movement of the sixteenth century called Protestantism stands foremost. Millions of Christians within a short period of time separated themselves from what they had been taught to believe was the Christian Church. Now, it is unnatural, as it is unchristian, that men who have a common nature and a common destiny, and who acknowledge the same Mediator and Saviour, should stand towards each other in hostile attitude. All is not right where such a state of things exists. To produce such results there must have been error somewhere, and guilt too. For humanity means common brotherhood. Truth is one. And Christianity is, in the highest sense of the words, Love and Truth.

These disagreeable facts, these primary truths, are becoming more and more apparent, and peo-

ple are becoming more and more convinced of them. Who knows? perhaps the time has come when men will consider impartially the causes which have brought about the deplorable religious dissensions and divisions existing among Christians, and that a movement is about to set in on all sides towards unity, and the prayer of Christ that "all who believe in Him might be made perfect in unity" will find its fulfilment. This is our hope. To contribute to this result we labor.

It is in the spirit of impartiality and charity that the investigation of this subject should be pursued. Perhaps we shall not succeed in this task as we would wish. Be that as it may, one thing our readers may be assured of: we approach it with the sincerest desire to tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth. We have nothing to hold back. The man who fears to face the whole truth is a coward.

The main point which faces every one who thinks seriously and consecutively on this subject is the Church question. By resistance to her authority Protestantism was an attack against the Church. It is, therefore, impossible to investigate this matter thoroughly and to settle it satisfactorily without first examining: What is the Church? Is the Church a voluntary assembly of

Christians? or is the Church a society established by Christ, through whose instrumentality Christ makes men Christians? Do Christians make the Church? or does the Church make Christians? That is the question.

If Christians make the Church, as Protestants maintain, then to make the Church we must first have Christians. This forces one to ask: How, then, does Christ make men Christians? All men who believe in Christ agree that the only way of becoming a Christian is by a personal communication from Christ. We must ask, therefore, what is the mode of that communication?

Now, man is a rational soul and a material body united in one personality. This personality is ordinarily reached through the instrumentality of the body. Christ came in contact with men, when upon earth, through His bodily organization. The question, then, resolves itself practically into this: How does Christ, from generation to generation until the end of time, reach men in order to make them Christians? or what is the principle of Christ's personal communications to men? The chief answer that Protestants give to this is, The Bible!

If the reading of the Bible were the ordinary means appointed by Christ to receive the grace of salvation for all men, then the first thing one

would suppose is this: as God wishes all men to be saved, He would bestow upon all men the gift to read at sight. But such is not the fact. It stands to reason, then, that the reading of the Bible cannot be the appointed way, for those who do not know how to read, of reaching Christ in a saving manner.

Again, everybody knows that one has to learn how to read. This is no slight task. It takes years to do it. Millions upon millions in the past never knew how to read. Millions upon millions do not know now how to read. Millions upon millions for generations to come will not, most likely, know how to read. To make salvation depend upon reading the Bible excludes all these souls from eternal life. A religion based upon such an hypothesis is not a practical religion. Therefore it cannot be Christianity.

Once more, if the reading of the Bible were the ordinary means of obtaining the power of God unto salvation, then one would reasonably expect to find recorded in the Bible from the lips of the Saviour Himself words of the following import: "Unless a man read the Bible and believe what he reads, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God." But such words are found in the Bible nowhere. The idea that one is to become a Christian by reading the Scriptures is not scriptural.

The Bible in its completeness, such as we now have it, did not exist in early apostolic days. Yet Christians laid down their lives during this period in testimony of the divine character of the Christian religion! Then, too, were given to the world the brightest examples of Christian heroism. All these never saw the complete Bible, for the New Testament was not then all written. How, then, could the reading of the Bible, such as we have it, be the ordinary way of making men Christians?

The art of printing was invented about the middle of the fifteenth century after the birth of Christ. Previous to this it was a small fortune, almost, to possess a copy of the Bible. This limits salvation to the wealthy only. The poor and the illiterate, who make up the bulk of mankind, were on this hypothesis excluded, from necessity, at least for fourteen centuries and upwards, from the kingdom of heaven! The thought is atrocious.

What is the Bible? The genuine Bible consists in what the Holy Spirit inspired. But certain books are held as inspired by some, and their inspiration is denied by others. It is notorious that men learned in these matters do not agree. Who is to judge which is which—what is the true canon of Holy Scripture?

What is the Bible? Surely not the simple written words, but their meaning as intended by the Holy Spirit. Who is to determine, in case of doubt, what was the meaning intended by the Holy Spirit? The Protestant hypothesis supplies to the bulk of mankind no such judge, no such criterion.

But suppose that everybody knew how to read, or all men were gifted to read at first sight; suppose that everybody had a copy of the Bible within his reach, a genuine Bible, and knew with certitude what it means; suppose that Christ Himself had laid it down as a rule that the Bible without note or comment, and as interpreted by each one for himself, is the ordinary way of receiving the grace of salvation, which is the vital principle of Protestantism—suppose all these evident assumptions to be true, would the Bible even in that case suffice to make any one man, woman, or child a Christian? Evidently not! And why? Because this is a personal work, and the personal work of Christ, for Christ alone can make men Christians. And no *account* of Christ is Christ. It was the special message of George Fox and his followers that the contents of a book, whatever these may be, are powerless to place its readers in direct contact and vital relations with its author; but nobody needs to be

told this nowadays. No man is so visionary as to imagine that the mental operation of reading the *Iliad*, or *Phædo*, or *The Divine Comedy* suffices to put him in communication with the personality of Homer, or Plato, or Dante. All effort is in vain to slake the thirst of a soul famishing for the Fountain of living waters from such a source, or to satisfy the cravings of a soul for the living Saviour with a printed book!

No doubt the written works of great men teach great truths, and great are the truths taught by inspired men; but one may know the whole Bible by heart without being thereby nearer to Christ. Christ nowhere enjoins reading the Bible. His words are: "Come unto ME, all ye that are weary and heavy laden, and I will give you rest." No book must be interposed between the soul and Christ.

Yet it was the attempt to make men Christians by reading the Bible that broke Christendom into fragments, multiplied jarring Christian sects, produced swarms of doubters, filled the world with sceptics and scoffers at all religion, frustrated combined Christian action, and put back the Christian conquest of the world for centuries.

Three centuries of experience have made it evident enough that if Christianity is to be maintained as a principle of life among men, it must

be on another footing than this suicidal hypothesis invented the sixteenth century after the birth of its divine Founder.

Undoubtedly the Bible is a precious book. It is the most precious of all books. The Bible is "*The* Book." The reading of the Bible is the most salutary of all reading. We say to Catholic readers, Read the Bible! Read it with prayer, that you may be enlightened by the light of the Holy Spirit to understand what you read. Read it with piety, that you may have the dispositions which will enable you to profit by what you read. Read it with gratitude to God's Church, which has preserved it and placed it in your hands to be read and to be followed.

God forbid that a word should ever proceed from our lips or be written by our pen that would diminish your esteem for the Bible! But it is not by fostering a false conception of its purpose, or by placing an exaggerated estimate upon its contents, that one learns its precious value. Great as this may be, Christ is more, is greater; and even the Bible is not to be put in comparison with Christ. "What did you do with your Bible?" asked one Christian of another. "What did I do with my precious Bible?" replied the saintly man. "Why, I followed its counsel: I sold it and gave the money to a poor

man in distress! Does not the Saviour say, 'Sell all that thou hast and give to the poor, and then come and follow Me'?" To substitute the Bible for Christ is bibliolatry.

Abandoning all effort to conceive how, on the Protestant hypothesis, men can be made rationally Christians, let us suppose for a moment that individual Christians, no matter how made, are the instrumentalities by which Christ makes His Church. Consider the consequences which flow from this assumption as a working principle. Grant this, and what is there to hinder any body of Christians from resolving themselves, whenever they think there is a sufficient reason, into a church? Why should not the discovery of a new truth, or a new interpretation of an old one, or the desire for a new rite or ceremony, or the revival of an obsolete one, or impatience with a hoary custom, produce a new sect, an additional ecclesiastical assembly, a church? Why not? Who as a Protestant can give good reasons why the protest against error, or the discovery of new religious truth, should stop with Martin Luther, or John Calvin, or Henry VIII., or John Knox, or George Fox, or John Wesley, or Mother Ann Lee, or Emmanuel Swedenborg, or Alexander Campbell, or Joseph Smith? Was not the setting up a new church a thing com-

mendable, a duty, a triumph of principle? Was it not on this individual conviction of duty or presumed personal right that Martin Luther had the hardihood or heroism to make his world-famous assumption at the Diet of Worms? Was it not upon the same assumption that every single one of the so-called Reformers proceeded? And what right had any one of these men that every other Christian man has not, and may not also, at any time he deems it proper, assume and freely exercise? Whatever unspent force the Protestant movement may still possess, it moves in the direction of breeding new sects and forming new churches. Thus Christ, who prayed for unity, is made, upon the Protestant principle, the author of division and the promoter of wrangling sects!

But sectarianism is not the ultimate outcome of the religious revolution of the sixteenth century. Suppose a number of Christians cannot agree to form another sect or make another church; what good reason, assuming the Protestant basis, can be given why every individual may not determine to be his own sect or church? As a working principle Protestantism resolves itself into individualism.

If "it was the resuscitated spirit of Jesus that began the revolt in the sixteenth century," as the author of the volume entitled *Ecce Spiritus* would

have men think, then Jesus was the author of individualism; and if of individualism, then of free-religion; and if of free-religion, then Christianity means anything that you please to call it. For if free-individualism is the high court of jurisdiction, then there is no room left for an appeal.

If free-individualism is Protestantism carried out to its logical consequences, then men who know how to put two ideas together in a logical form fail to see why the cloak of Dr. Martin Luther at the Diet of Worms does not cover under its folds equally the Anabaptist John of Leyden, M. D. Bennett, the late free-love editor of the *Truthseeker*, the "insane" Freeman, and the murderer Guiteau. The declaration that Freeman, who, in obedience to an inspiration, killed his daughter Edith, was insane, and the condemnation of Guiteau, who killed President Garfield, as a murderer, may pass without note or comment in a Protestant community, but men who look below the surface of things trace without difficulty the features of Martin Luther in the lineaments of Freeman and Guiteau.

For men to whom thinking consecutively is a necessity do not hesitate to say that a religion which affords no criterion between the inspirations of the Holy Spirit and the criminal conceits of passion, a religion which delivers the Bible to the inter-

pretation of each individual for himself, leaves itself open fairly to all sorts of attacks, and cannot reasonably condemn those who rely upon the premise which it furnishes them for their justification when they follow it out to its logical conclusions. They do not hesitate to affirm that when Freeman was declared insane and sent to an asylum, and Guiteau was put on criminal trial, Protestantism was sent to Bedlam and tried for its life in a criminal court. And when Guiteau was condemned by an American judge and jury as a murderer, and this verdict to all appearance was ratified by the American people, then and there the standpoint of Protestantism was also condemned. For if the oracle within each individual is, in religion, the high tribunal of last appeal, when these men appealed to this oracle within to prove that they had done good and praiseworthy acts, and they were nevertheless condemned, then the principle upon which Protestantism was started by Martin Luther was condemned and declared to be insanity. And now a bronze statue is about to be erected, or is already erected, in honor of Martin Luther, in the very city which hanged as a criminal, upon an infamous gallows, his logical child!

But if a statue were erected in every village, town, and city in the length and breadth of this extensive land in honor of the pseudo-reformer, it

would not hide from intelligent men the falseness of the fundamental principle of the religious secession of the sixteenth century, or expunge its condemnation by judge and jury from the authentic records of our American criminal courts!

But Freeman and Guiteau still claimed to be Christians, though Protestant; and the more venturesome spirits, on the basis of "the divine right to bolt," feel at liberty to push forward their protest against all Christian truths, whether intellectual or ethical, as though chaos were the garden of paradise and zero the ultimate goal of all felicity. Is it surprising, when such views circulate in a community, that in the course of time the complaint should be made of the lack of candidates for the ministry, the falling off of church membership, and the cry of alarm should be sounded of the impending danger of extinction? Protestantism, like all other heresies, failing to secure a rational foothold, disintegrates; and when men once discern this fact no effort can prevent it from rapidly extinguishing itself.

We now turn our attention to Catholics and ask them the same question: What is the Church? or, How does Christ continue to fulfil His mission upon earth from generation to generation unto the end of time? We have Christ's own promise to remain upon earth until the end of the world, in these

words: "Lo! I am with you always, even unto the consummation of the world." And all Christians, as has been said, agree that Christ alone can make men Christians. The problem to be solved is this: How does Christ fulfil His promise? The Protestant solution of this problem is no solution. And, if in courtesy we allow it the name of one, experience has demonstrated that it is unsatisfactory and self-destructive. How stands the case with the Catholic solution?

It is no answer, as we have seen, to say that the Church is made by Christians. Let us reverse the answer, and say that it is Christ, by the instrumentality of the Church, who makes Christians, and see whether the difficulty does not disappear.

For Christianity, once the Incarnation is admitted, must, to be an effective and practical religion, somewhere exist as an organic force. This statement is based upon the principle that without organism there is no vital force. Christianity is life, and no believer in Christ will for a moment deny that since God became man, Christianity is an organic force. Or what believer in Christ will entertain the thought that Christ will yield the advanced position He gained by becoming man? Life, then, to operate upon men effectually, must be organic, incorporated life. That Christ is the true life of men in the highest sense of the word He

Himself affirmed: "I am the life of the world." To a Christian mind this needs no further proof.

This is why Christ Himself, before His ascension, designed His Church. Christ chose and appointed her first officers, conferring upon them their special powers, instituted her sacraments, laid down the principles of her discipline, and formed the main features of her worship. Christ was the architect of His Church, and the Holy Spirit incorporated what Christ had designed.

Hence the Church of Christ, as an organism, is the logical sequence of the Incarnation, and not an accident or after-thought of Christ's mission to men as their Mediator and Saviour. The Church may justly be said to be the expansion, prolongation, and perpetuation of the Incarnation. Behold the method by which Christ fulfils His promise to remain upon earth unto the consummation of the world!

We have now found the key of the Catholic position. This gives us the Catholic solution of the problem, Who built the Church? A Catholic can claim with confidence as his motto: "Christ yesterday, to-day, and the same for ever!"

No other explanation of Christianity than the indwelling Christ in His Church as the actual and historical religion is tenable. Hence those sectarians who feel called upon to defend the Christian

religion against the attacks of infidelity find themselves forced to uphold the divine origin and character, not of the truncated and parvenu sect to which they belong, but the great historical Catholic Church—so much so that some of the more recent expositions and defences of the Christian religion might pass, with little or no essential alterations, the ecclesiastical censorship of the Church of Rome.

Men build Churches! Churches built by human hands!—what else could these be fitly called but towers of Babel?

The Catholic idea, then, is this: that Christ, the only-begotten Son of God, has become man, and, after His ascension, continues His mission upon earth through the instrumentality of His Church as really and truly as when He was manifest in the flesh and walked among men, in the country about Judea. And all enlightened and upright men, when they see her as she is, recognize spontaneously the Catholic Church as "the Body" or "the Spouse of Christ," just as the Israelites without guile recognized at first sight Christ as the Messias.

We have seen who made the Church and what is the nature of the Church; let us see now how Christ, through the instrumentality of the Church, makes Christians. The work of the Church of

Christ is the continuation of Christ's own work upon earth with men. Christ's work was the communication of life to the world, to give the grace of filiation with God to men, women, and children. Now, as human beings are constituted they can neither act nor be acted upon independently of their bodily organization. Hence life, to be communicated to men, must be organic. But the organic communication of sonship with God belongs exclusively to the only-begotten Son of God, the God-Man. Hence the power and life of the Church can be no other than the indwelling Christ. As the soul is the life of the body, so Christ is the life of the Church. This is why St. Paul calls the Church "the Body of Christ." This is the reason why he who has not the Church for his mother cannot have the Son of God for his brother, and he who is not the brother of Christ cannot have God for his father. Therefore he who has not the Church for his mother cannot be a child of God. For the object of Christ in the Church is not to interpose the Church, or her sacraments, or her worship between Himself and the soul, but through their instrumentality to come in personal contact with the soul, and by the power of His grace to wash away its sins, communicate to it sonship with God as the heavenly Father, and thereby to sanctify it. None but a denier of the Divinity of

Christ will incline to regard such a doctrine as springing from "a materialistic view of Christianity."

For underlying the Incarnation there is necessarily an idea of materiality. "The Word was made flesh." God, who made the rational soul, made also the material body, and it is the rational soul united to the material body that constitutes man, and that constituted the humanity of Christ. It is spirit and matter united by the authority of Christ that constitute a sacrament. The Incarnation is the universal sacrament, from which divine source the specific sacraments derive their grace and efficacy.

Catholics repudiate both formalism and materialism. They repudiate materialism, and consider it an insufferable tyranny for an assembly of men who profess to be Christians to insist, as most Protestant sects do, upon the reception of a sacrament whose inward reality they have repudiated! This is rank materialism. If this be the only door which opens to Christianity, then it is no wonder that serious-minded men who have a conception of Christianity as a spiritual religion, rather than enter by such a door, seek a home in solitude and content themselves in its haunts with nature and nature's God. At least they are resolved to keep their faculties uncrippled and their hearts upright.

Catholics repudiate formalism. A sacrament is no idle ceremony or mere outward sign, or rite, or symbol. A sacrament is an external means, instituted by Christ, to convey grace to the soul. These are the three essential elements of a sacrament, lacking any one of which it is no sacrament.

Man is not a bodiless spirit; a religion without a sensible sign or medium is not fitted for the two-fold nature of man. Christianity has abjured shadows; and a sacrament is not a symbol of a process, but the very process itself of conveying grace to the soul. If a symbol lacks the grace of Christ, then it is powerless to regenerate and sanctify souls. A sacrament without grace is a fraud. God alone is competent to institute a sacrament. For God alone is the author and source of grace, and a sacrament not instituted by Christ has no valid reason for its existence. The realities which the Jewish ordinances foreshadowed and promised the sacraments of the Church of Christ possess and bestow upon men. The sacraments, the Church, the Incarnation, and the twofold nature of man are all essentially inter-related. The Incarnation, the church, and the sacraments rest upon the same foundation.

But does God's mercy dispense no grace outside of the sacraments? God's mercy is not tied to the sacraments, but ordinarily He operates through their

instrumentality. The sacraments were not instituted to hedge in the action of God's mercy. On the contrary, the sacraments were instituted by Christ in order that the precious gifts of God's mercy might be *more* freely distributed and *more* abundantly received. Christ alone is the inward reality of the Church, of her sacraments, of her discipline, of her worship, and the Church exists solely for her inward reality—Christ.

Neither should it be overlooked that when a church fails to supply sufficient external appliances and supports to spiritual truths and to the inward feelings of devotion awakened by grace, when her worship becomes colorless, then religion fails to exert that influence over the minds and hearts of men which properly belongs to its sphere. And when religion fails to give, by the symbolical use of the beauties and harmonies of nature, that spiritual comfort and inward satisfaction which the great bulk of mankind legitimately seek from it, they become restless, sad, and sour. The consciousness of spiritual destitution has led even the Unitarians to observe Christian festivals and decorate their religious structures with Christian art and with flowers; while stiff Presbyterianism gives its reluctant consent to the introduction of the "kist o' whustles" into its places of divine worship in order to lend more attractiveness to the singing

of the praises of the Lord. It is to this reaction against the repudiation of the corporeal side of man's nature under the pretence of a spiritual Christianity that the extravagances of ritualism, the crude efforts of Salvation Armies, and the rise of other disturbing elements can be traced.

There is a heresy of the spirit, as there is a heresy of the forms, of religion. Both are mischievous, fatal to man's happiness, destructive of human society. Christ stigmatizes the partisans of both extremes as "fools." "Ye fools," He said, "did not He who made that which is without make that which is within also?" All attempts at separating the without from the within, or the within from the without, betray heretical tendencies and end in spiritual death.

True religion, Christianity, in its mission to sanctify human nature, takes it as its Maker made it, and neither seeks its destruction nor to alter its constitution. It is a radical misconception to suppose that the reception of the sacraments abases religion. The sacraments are due to the wise provision of God to convey to men, in a way fitting to their nature, the grace of Christ. And the aim of Christ is the purification of human nature from all alien mixture, and, by its elevation to a higher plane of life, to enhance immeasurably its activity, its dignity, and its joy.

Behold the Catholic solution of the problem of the Church question, and how Christ through her instrumentality remains upon earth and makes men Christians!

Men hold the state sacred; and so it is. They can scarcely forgive those who revolt against the legitimate authority of the state. How great, then, must be the crime of those who revolt against the authority of the Church of Christ!

Men in whom intelligence has a controlling influence in the formation of their religious belief look upon Protestantism as destitute of an intellectual as it is of a moral basis. They perceive that all the force it ever had was borrowed, and this is all spent, or nearly so. They have learned to cease to respect it as the representative of Christianity. They see also clearly enough that he who imagines that the age is seeking a new form of heresy is greatly mistaken. The age is weary of heresy, whether theological, philosophical, or scientific. Men are sick to death of heresy. What the age demands is more life, not less. Men seek fulness. The increasing tendency of the age is towards unity.

They also misunderstand their age who fancy that the repudiation of sectarianism is a movement which ultimates itself in infidelity or free-religion. Some men of our times distinguished for their intellectual gifts have committed this mistake, and now find

themselves entrapped into the pits of agnosticism, scepticism, and positivism. But there is no rest for souls in these stray places. The age is awake to better things. The repudiation of sectarianism, with sound and healthy minds, is a movement forward to genuine Christianity.

They, too, misinterpret the promise of the age who look for the solution of its problems to a new coming of Christ. Christ has come. Christ is here, now upon earth. Christ ever abides with men, according to His word. What the age promises men is the rending asunder the clouds of error which hinder them from seeing that Christ is here. What the age promises and men most need is the light to enable their eyes to see that the Incarnation involves Christ's indwelling presence in His Church acting upon man and society through her agency until the consummation of the world. Christ is here, and was never more so.

The faces of upright men who best represent their age are set Christward. False Christianity has been forced to unmask itself. Men seek a closer fellowship with God. They ask to worship God in His very beauty, grandeur, and holiness. Some simply feel this. Some point out the way to it. Others are in the way. Others, again, have reached the goal; these are the early-ripened fruits of the approaching rich harvest of God's Church.

Nothing less can satisfy the inmost desire of the soul, when once awakened, than truth in its wholeness and fulness. The mists of heresy are lifted up to make way for the glorious vision of the Church of the living God, the pillar and ground of truth. The winter is past, the spring has come, and the voice of the turtle-dove is heard in the land.

# X.

# THE SPIRITUAL WORLD AND THE RULE OF FAITH.

DR. NEVIN'S* writings are characterized by an earnest religious spirit, a freedom from bigotry, and they always aim at conveying some important Christian verity; which, although he scarcely can be said to know it, finds its true home only in the bosom of the Catholic Church. Hence Catholics can but take an interest in whatever Dr. Nevin writes, and we intend to lay before our readers, with some remarks of our own, the purport of his present article, entitled "The Spiritual World."

In this article Dr. Nevin tries to show and prove that the work of salvation includes not only the resistance to inordinate passions, but above all a struggle against, and a conquest over, the world of evil spirits. This is his thesis. He says:

* "The Spiritual World," by J. W. Nevin, D.D., the *Mercersburg Review*, October, 1876.

"Flesh and blood, self, the world, and the things of the world around us here in the body, are indeed part of the hostile force we are called to encounter in our way to heaven ; they are not the whole of this force, however, nor are they the main part of it, by any means. That belongs always to a more inward and far deeper realm of being, where the powers of the spiritual world are found to go immeasurably beyond all the powers of nature, and to be, at the same time, in truth, the continual source and spring of all that is in these last, whether for good or for evil. The Christian conflict thus, even where it regards things simply of the present life, looks through what is thus mundane, constantly to things which are unseen and eternal ; and in this way it becomes in very fact throughout a wrestling, not with flesh and blood, but with the universal powers of evil brought to bear upon us from the other world."

The views strongly put forth by Dr. Nevin, we hardly need remark, are familiar to all Catholics; they agree with the doctrines of all Catholic spiritual authors, especially the mystics, who have written professedly on this subject, and their truth is abundantly illustrated on almost every page of the lives of the saints. The Catholic mystical authors, many of whom were saints, have gone over the entire ground of our relations with the supernatural world, and, both by their learning and personal experience, have conveyed, in their writings on this subject, important knowledge, laid down wise regulations, and given in detail safe, wholesome, practical directions. They seem to breathe the same atmosphere as that in which the Holy Scriptures were written. The saints lived in the habitual and conscious presence, and in some cases in sight,

of the inhabitants of the supernatural world; and so familiar was their intercourse with the angelical side, and at times so dreadful were the combats to which they were delivered on the diabolical side, that their lives, for this very reason, become a stumbling-block to worldly Catholics and to Protestants generally. In the lives of her saints the Catholic Church proves that she is not only the teacher of Christianity, but also the inheritor and channel of its life and spirit. How far Dr. Nevin himself would agree with this intense realism of the Church in connection with the supernatural world, as seen in the lives of her saints, we have no special means of knowing; but if we may judge from the spirit and drift of the article under consideration, he goes much farther in this direction than is usual for Protestants. Be his opinion what it may, the lives of the saints form a concrete evidence of the truth of his thesis. It is the sense of nearness of the spiritual world, and its bearing on the Christian life, pervading as it does the public worship, the private devotions, and the general tone of Catholics, that characterizes them from those who went out from the fold of the Catholic Church in the religious revolution three centuries ago. This whole field has become to Protestants, in the process of time, a *terra incognita;* and if Dr. Nevin can bring them again to its knowledge, and in "constant, living

union" with it, he will have done a most extraordinary work.

Efforts of a similar nature have not been wanting in one way or another, and are not now wanting, among Protestants. There are those who show a decided interest in the works of the spiritual writers of the Catholic Church. Strange to say—and yet it is not strange, for in this they follow the law of *similia similibus*—they are particularly fond of those authors whose writings are not altogether sound or whose doctrines are tainted with exaggerations. Thus Dr. Upham will write the life of Madame Guyon; another will translate *The Maxims of the Saints*, by Fénelon; and to another class there is a peculiar charm in the history of the Jansenistic movement of Port Royal; others, again, moved by the same instinct, but better directed, will not hesitate to acknowledge with Dr. Mahan that "such individuals as Thomas à Kempis, Catherine Adorno [he means St. Catherine of Genoa], and many others were not only Christians, but believers who had a knowledge of all the mysteries of the higher life, and who, through all coming time, will shine as stars of the first magnitude in the firmament of the Church. In their inward experiences, holy walk, and 'power with God and with men,' they had few, if any, superiors in any preceding era of Church history. 'The unction of the Spirit' was as manifest in them

as in the apostles and primitive believers"; * while many of this class in the Episcopal Church translate from foreign languages into English the works of Catholic ascetic writers, and books of devotion, for the use of pious members of their persuasion. The Rev. S. Baring-Gould will give you in English, in many volumes, the complete lives of the saints. They even go so far, both in England and the United States, as to found religious orders of both sexes as schools for the better attainment of Christian perfection, and venture to take the name of a Catholic saint as their patron.

It is evident that, among a class of souls upon whom the Church can be said to exert no direct influence, there is a movement towards seeking nearer relations with the unseen spiritual world, accompanied with a desire for closer union with God. It finds expression among all Protestant denominations. With the Methodists and Presbyterians it is known by the name of "perfectionism," or "the higher life," or "the baptism of the Holy Ghost." It is also manifested by the efforts made now and again for union among all the Protestant sects. It is the same craving of this mystical instinct for satisfaction that lies at the root of spiritism, which has spread so rapidly

* *The Baptism of the Holy Ghost*, by Rev. Asa Mahan, D.D., p. 81.

and extensively outside of the Catholic Church, not only among sceptics and unbelievers, but even among all classes of Protestants, and entered largely into their pulpits.

The former movement assumes a religious aspect; but lacking the scientific knowledge of spiritual life, and the practical discipline necessary to its true development and perfection, it gradually dies out or runs into every kind of vagary and exaggeration. Recently, after having made not a little commotion among different denominations in England and Germany, it came, in the person of its American apostle, Mr. Pearsall Smith, to a sudden and disgraceful collapse. "If the blind lead the blind, both fall into the ditch." The latter movement—spiritism—leads directly to the entire emancipation of the flesh, resulting in free-lovism, and sometimes ending in diabolism. Spiritism is Satan's master-stroke, in which he obtains from his victims the denial of his own existence. These are some of the bitter fruits of the separation from Catholic unity: those who took this step under the pretence of seeking a higher spiritual life are afflicted with spiritual languor and death; and they who were led by a boasted independence of Christ have fallen into the snares of Satan and become his dupes and abject slaves. Behold the revenge of neglected Catholic truth; for only in Catholic unity every

truth is held in its true relation with all other truths, shines in its full splendor, and produces its wholesome and precious fruits!

Suppose for a moment that Dr. Nevin should succeed in the task which he has undertaken, and by his efforts raise those around him, and the whole Protestant world, to a sense of their relation to the supernatural world. What then? Why, he has only brought souls to a state which many Protestants have reached before; and when they sought for the light, aid, and sympathy which these new conditions required, in those around them, they found none.

By quickening their spiritual sensibilities you have opened the door to wilder fancies, more dangerous illusions, and thereby exposed the salvation of their souls to greater perils. For, as St. Gregory tells us: "*Ars artium est regimen animarum*"—the art of arts is the guidance of souls; and where is this art, this science, this discipline, to be found? Not in Protestantism. What then? Why, either these souls have to renounce their holiest convictions, their newly-awakened spiritual life, and sink into their former insensibility; or go where they can find true guidance, certain peace, and spiritual progress—enter into the bosom of the holy Catholic Church; there alone the cravings of that spiritual hunger can be appeased, and the soul can at last breathe freely.

But there is another point involved in Dr. Nevin's article; and however much, as Catholics, we may sympathize with his endeavors to awaken Protestants to their relations with the supernatural world, this point in question will come up, and we cannot help putting it: What is Dr. Nevin's criterion of revealed truth? The rule of interpretation of the written Word? Dr. Nevin has one; for neither he nor any one else can move a single step without employing and applying, implicitly or explicitly, a rule of faith. He criticises, judges, condemns others, but on what ground? Does his own position, at bottom, differ from the position of those whom he condemns? He lacks neither the ability nor the learning to make a consistent statement on this point. Truth is consistent. God is not the author of confusion.

Where does Dr. Nevin find or put the rule of faith? If it be placed in simple human reason, then we have as the result, in religion, pure rationalism. If it be placed in human reason illuminated by grace, then we have illuminism. If it be placed in both of these, with the written Word —that is, the Bible as interpreted by each individual with the assistance of divine grace—then we have the common rule of faith of all Protestants, so fruitful in breeding sects and schisms, and inevitably tending to the entire negation of Christianity.

This last appears to be Dr. Nevin's rule of faith; for what else does he mean when in the beginning of his article, in its second sentence, he makes the following surprising statement: "Christianity is a theory of salvation"? Did God descend from heaven and become man upon earth, live, suffer, and die, and for what? "A theory"! Is this the whole issue and reality of Christianity—"a theory," a speculation? Did Christ rise from the dead and ascend to the Father, and, with Him, send forth upon earth the Holy Ghost, to create "a theory," a speculation, or an abstraction? "Christianity a theory"! We fear that one who would deliberately make that assertion has never had the true conception of what is meant by the reality of Christianity. What would be said of a man who in treating of the sun should say: The sun is a theory, or a speculation, or an exposition of the abstract principles of light? If the sun be a theory, it would be quickly asked, what becomes, in the meanwhile, of the reality of the sun? This way of dealing with Christianity, while professing to explain it, allows its reality altogether to escape. Notwithstanding Dr. Nevin's condemnation of "the abstract spiritualistic thinking of the age," and of those who would make Christianity "a fond sentiment simply of their own fancy," he falls, in his definition of Christianity,

into the very same error which in others he emphatically condemns.

That this is so is evident; for while he says, "Christianity is a theory," he adds in the same sentence, "and is made known to us by divine revelation." Now, the separation, even in idea, between the Church and Christianity, is the fountain, source, and origin of all the illusions and errors uttered or written, since the beginning, concerning the Christian religion. The attempt to get at and set up a Christianity independently of the Christian Church is the very essence and nature of all heresies. The Church and Christianity are distinguishable, but not separable; and in assuming their separability, as a primary position, lies all the confusion of ideas and misapprehensions of Christianity in the author of the article under present consideration. This point needs further explanation, as it is all-important, and forms, indeed, the very root of the matter. "Christianity is a theory," says Dr. Nevin, "and is made known to us by divine revelation." But what does Dr. Nevin mean by "divine revelation"? Here are his own words in explanation:

"When the question arises, How are we to be made in this way partakers of the living Christ, so that our religion shall be in very deed—not a name only, not a doctrinal or ritualistic fetich merely, nor a fond sentiment simply of our own fancy?" "All turns in this case on our standing in the divine order as it

reaches us from the Father through the Son. That meets us in the written Word of God, which, in the way we have before seen, is nothing less in its interior life than the presence of the Lord of life and glory Himself in the world."

Again:

"We cannot now follow out the subject with any sort of adequate discussion. We will simply say, therefore, that what our Lord says here of His words or commandments is just what the Scriptures everywhere attribute to themselves in the same respect and view. They claim to be spirit and life, to have in them supernatural and heavenly power, to be able to make men wise unto everlasting life, to be the Word of God which liveth and abideth for ever—not the memory or report simply of such word spoken in time past, but the always present energy of it reaching through the ages. The Scriptures—God's law, testimonies, commandments, statutes, judgments, His word in form of history, ritual, psalmody, and prophecy—are all this through what they are as the 'testimony of Jesus'; and therefore it is that they are, in truth, what the ark of God's covenant represented of old, the conjunction of heaven and earth, and in this way a real place of meeting or convention between men and God. To know this, to own it, to acknowledge inwardly the presence of Christ in His Word, as the same Jehovah from whom the law came on Mount Sinai; and then to fear the Lord as thus revealed in His Word, to bow before His authority, and to walk in His ways; or, in shorter phrase, to 'fear God and keep His commandments,' because they *are His* commandments, and not for any lower reason—this is the whole duty of man, and of itself the bringing of man into union with God; the full verification of which is reached at last only in and by the Word made glorious through the glorification of the Lord Himself; as when, in the passage before us, He makes the keeping of His commandments the one simple condition of all that is comprehended in the idea of the mystical union between Himself and His people."

According, then, to Dr. Nevin, "the divine order of our being" made "partakers of the living Christ is in the Word of God,"

To make what is plain unmistakable, he adds:

"What we have to do, then, especially in the war we are called to wage with the powers of hell, is to see that this conjunction with Christ be in us really and truly, through a proper continual use of the Word of God for this purpose."

There is here and there throughout this article a haziness of language which smacks of Swedenborgianism, and makes it difficult to seize its precise meaning; but we submit that Dr. Nevin—and he will probably accept the statement, as our only aim is to get at his real meaning—proceeds on the supposition that Christianity is a theory, and becomes real as each individual, illumined by divine light, discovers and appropriates it in reading the written Word—the Bible. This is the common ground of Protestantism; and Dr. Nevin holds no other than the rule of faith of all Protestants. The following passage places this beyond doubt or cavil:

"It was the life of the risen Lord Himself, shining into the written Word, and through this into the mind of the disciples, which, by inward correspondence, served to open their understanding to the proper knowledge of both. And as it was then, so it is still. We learn what the written Word is only by light from the incarnate Word; but then, again, we learn what the light of the incarnate Word is only as this shines into us through the written Word—a circle, it is true, which alone, however, brings us to the true ground of the Christian faith."

We need scarcely tell our readers that this pretended rule of faith is no rule of faith at all. It breaks down on any reasonable test which you may

apply to it. It will not stand the trial of the written Word itself, nor of history, nor of common sense, nor of good and sound logic. This has been too often demonstrated to require here long argumentation. Therefore, when a man ventures to speak for Christianity, and professes to define and explain what is Christianity, the question rises up at once, and naturally: What does this man know, in fact, about Christianity? Did he live in the time of Christ? Did he ever speak to Christ, or see Him? Was he a witness to His miracles? Why, no! He can bear testimony to none of these events. If he was not a contemporary of Christ, what, then, does he know about Him? Where has he obtained his knowledge to set up for a teacher of Christianity? On what grounds does he presume to speak for Christianity? Does he come commissioned by those whom Christ authorized to teach in His name? Why, no; they repudiate him in the character of a teacher of Christ. Does he prove by direct miraculous power from God a special commission to speak in His name? Why, no! Then he has no commission, indirect or direct; then he is unauthorized, he is a self-sent and a self-appointed teacher!

But he fancies he has a right to speak for Christianity on the authority of certain historical documents which contain an account of Christ and

His doctrines. But how about these documents? What authority verified and stamped them with its approval as genuine, and rejected others, which professed to be genuine, as spurious? Why, the very authority which verified these documents, and on which he has to rely for their genuineness and divine inspiration, is the very authority which altogether denies his presumed right of teaching Christianity! The authority which authenticated them rejects as spurious his claim to be the interpreter of their true meaning. How does he get over this difficulty? He does not get over it. He cannot get over it; he simply ignores it.

But do these documents profess to give a full and complete account of Christianity? By no means. He assumes this too. What! assumes the vital point of a rule which is in dispute? He does. Strange that those who were inspired to write these so important documents should not have written their great object plainly on their face; and stranger still, if they did, that this should have remained a secret so many centuries before its pretended discovery!

Then this was not the way the primitive Christians learned Christianity? Not at all. There were millions of Christians who spilt their blood for Christianity, and millions more who had died in

the faith, before these documents were verified and put in the shape in which we now have them and called the Bible. This pretended rule, then, unchristianizes the early Christians? It does; and does more—it unchristianizes the great bulk of Christians since; for the mass of Christians could not obtain Bibles before the invention of printing, and could not read them if they had them. Even to-day, if this be the rule, how about the children, the blind, and those who cannot read—not a small number? How are they to become Christians?

But as the Bible is an inspired book, to get at its true meaning requires the same divine Spirit which inspired it? Of course it does. But do they that follow this rule assume that each one for himself has this divine Spirit? Nothing else. But are they sure of this? Sure of it?—they say so. But are they sure that each one has the divine Spirit to interpret rightly the divinely-inspired, written Word? Each one thinks so. Thinks so! But do they not know it? Do they not know it? Why, let me explain: "You see we learn what the written Word is only by light from the incarnate Word." But how do you get the light from the incarnate Word? Why, "we learn what the light of the incarnate Word is only as this shines into us through the written word." That is, you suppose

that the Bible, read with proper dispositions, conveys to your soul divine grace? Just so. That is, you put the Bible in the place of the sacraments; but that is not the question now. The question, the point, now at issue is: How do you know that that light which shines into you through the written Word is not "a fond sentiment simply of your own fancy," is not a delusion, instead of "the light of the incarnate Word"? "Oh! I see what you are aiming at. A book divinely inspired requires for its interpreter the divine Spirit to get at its divine meaning. Now, if those who assume to possess this Spirit contradict each other point-blank in their interpretation of its meaning, then this is equivalent to charging the Holy Spirit, the Spirit of truth, with error; and such a charge is blasphemy! But this is pushing things too far."

Perhaps so; nevertheless, those who follow this rule of faith do differ in their interpretation of Holy Scripture, and differ as far as heaven is from earth. There is no end to their differences. Almost every day breeds a new sect. They not only differ from each other, but each one differs from himself; and why? Because none are certain that they have the inspired Word of God except on a basis which undermines their position; and none are certain that

the light by which they interpret the written Word of God is the unerring Spirit of truth. Hence all who hold this rule either go off into vagaries and delusions, or gradually decline into uncertitude, doubt, scepticism, and total unbelief.

But how do the followers of this rule of faith interpret those passages of Holy Scriptures which speak so plainly of the Church?—for instance, where Christ promises to "build His Church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it"; "He that heareth not the Church, let him be to thee as a heathen and a publican"; "The Church of the living God, the pillar and ground of truth"; "Christ died for the Church"; "The Church is ever subject to Christ"; and others of like import. They either pass them by as of no account, or deal with them as an artist does with a piece of clay or wax—they mould them to suit their fancy. Truly, this rule of faith reduces the divine reality of Christianity to the efforts of one's own thought—"a theory."

Dr. Nevin may struggle against the inevitable results of this rule, as he does in several places in the present article, but he stands on the same inclined plane as those whom he condemns, and, in spite of his earnest counter-efforts, he is descending visibly with them into the same abyss. For the

effort to get at the reality of Christianity and to escape the recognition of the divine authority of the Church, through the personal interpretation of the written Word, is a vain, absurd, and fatal expedient. "He that entereth not by the door into the sheepfold, but climbeth up another way, the same is a thief and a robber" (St. John x. 1).

As the attempt to separate the Church and Christianity from each other empties Christianity of all its contents and destroys its reality, so, reversely, the conception of the transcendent union and inseparability of the Church and Christianity leads to the recognition of the living, constant, divine reality of Christianity. For the Christian Church was called into being by God, the Holy Ghost, the Creator Spirit; and as this primary creative act still subsists in her in all its original vigor, she is, at every moment of her life, equally real, living, divine. Just as the created universe exists by the continuation of the creative act which called it into existence at the beginning, so the Catholic Church exists by the continuation of the supernatural creative act which called her into existence on the day of Pentecost. Once the Church, always the Church.

The Church and the Bible are, in their divine origin, one; they co-operate together for the same end, and are in their nature inseparable. But the written Word is relative or subsidiary to the Church,

having for its aim to enlighten, to strengthen, and to perfect the faithful in that supernatural life of the Spirit in which they were begotten in the laver of regeneration, in the bosom of the holy Church. The purpose of the written Word is, therefore, to effect a more perfect realization of the Church, and to accelerate her true progress in the redemption and sanctification of the world. Hence the written Word presupposes the existence of the Church, is within and in the keeping of the Church, and depends on her divine authority for its authentication and true interpretation. The Church is primary, and not enclosed in the written Word; but the end of the written Word is enclosed in that of the Church.

Were not a word of divine revelation written, the Church would have none the less existed in all her divine reality, and she would have none the less accomplished her divine mission upon earth. For God, the indwelling Holy Spirit, is her life, power, guide, and protector. God the Son was incarnate in the man Christ Jesus; so God the Holy Spirit was incorporate in the Holy Catholic Church—*Sanctus Spiritus est anima Ecclesiæ.*

Undoubtedly the Apostles were inspired by the Holy Spirit to write all that they wrote; but their Gospels and their Epistles always presuppose the Church as existing. To appeal, therefore, from

the Church to the written Word of the New Testament is, if nothing else, to be guilty of an anachronism.

Even as to the Old Testament before the Incarnation, as well as the New Testament after the Incarnation, the reality of the Church consisted, independently of both, in that supernatural communion between God and man which began at the moment of his creation. The Church, therefore, existed in the garden of Paradise, and was historically primary in the order of supernatural communications.

Wherein does Dr. Nevin differ from the Ebionites, the Nicolaites, the Gnostics, the common Protestants, down to Joe Smith, Père Hyacinthe, and Bishop Reinkens? Perceptibly, at bottom, there is no difference. Dr. Nevin appears to have never asked himself seriously the most searching of all questions, to wit: What, in the last analysis, is the basis, standard, or rule by which I judge what is and what is not Christianity? He ventures to treat of the gravest questions and most momentous mysteries touching the kingdom of God, on which the saints would not have ventured a personal opinion; and on what grounds? But it may be said in his excuse, and with truth, that this self-sufficient attitude is due to the very position of defiance to the divine authority of the

Church in which all those who have gone out, or are born out, of her fold are necessarily involved.

To sum up: Either we must suppose that God has left the task to every individual to direct the human race to the great end for which He created it—and thus the individual occupies the place of Almighty God, and turns the crank of the universe to suit his own fancy, or the schemes and theories of his little brain—or we must believe in "a divine order," in being made constant partakers of the living Christ "in a concrete form." In this case, our first duty is to find this real concrete body, become a member and partaker of its divine life, and, in conquering the obstacles in the way of our salvation, co-operate in its divine work for the sanctification of the whole world.

# XI.

# UNITARIANISM AND THE FATHERHOOD OF GOD.*

THE Unitarians held at Saratoga their last biennial conference, and we have looked over the issues of the *Liberal Christian*, a weekly publication of this city, for a full report of its proceedings, and looked to no purpose. It has, however, printed in its columns some of the speeches delivered in the conference, and given *in extenso* the opening sermon of the Rev. Edward E. Hale. Before the conference took place the *Liberal Christian* spoke of Rev. Edward E. Hale "as one of the few thoroughly-furnished and widely-experienced men in their ranks." This notice prepared us to give special attention to the opening sermon, and to expect from it a statement of Unitarian principles or beliefs which would at least command the

* "A Free-born Church." The sermon preached before the National Conference of Unitarian and other Christian Churches at Saratoga, Tuesday evening, Sept. 12. The *Liberal Christian*, New York, Sept. 16, 1876.

assent of a considerable portion of the Unitarian denomination. More than this it would have been unreasonable to anticipate; for so radical and extreme are their divergencies of belief that it may be said Unitarians agree on no one common objective truth; certainly not, if Mr. Frothingham and the section which the latter gentleman represents are to be ranked within the pale of Unitarianism.

But let us consider for a moment Mr. Hale's view of the historical aspect of the Church. The following extract sums up his opinion:

"And, in truth, so soon as the Church met with the world, it borrowed while it lent, it took while it gave. So, in the face of learned Egypt, it Egyptianized its simple Trinity; in the face of powerful Rome it heathenized its nascent ritual; in the face of wordy Greece it Hellenized its dogmatics and theology; and by way of holding well with Israel it took up a rabbin's reverence even for the jots and tittles of its Bible. What history calls 'Christianity,' therefore, is a man-adorned system, of which the methods can be traced to convenience, or even to heathen wisdom, if we except that one majestic method by which every true disciple is himself ordained a king and a priest, and receives the charge that in his daily life he shall proclaim glad tidings to every creature."

The common error of the class of men to whom the Rev. E. E. Hale belongs, who see the Church, if at all, only on the outside, is to "put the cart before the horse." It is not the Egyptians, the Greeks, the Romans, who teach the Church of Christ, but the Church of Christ

which teaches the truth to the Egyptians, the Greeks, and the Romans. Christ came to teach all nations, not to be taught by them. Hence, in communicating His mission to His Church, He said: "All power is given to Me in heaven and in earth. Going, therefore, teach ye all nations." * The Church, in fulfilling this divine commission of teaching all nations, utilizes their gifts in bringing out the great truths committed to her care by her divine Founder. It is in this co-operation with the work of the Church that the different nations and races of men find the inspiration of their genius, the noblest employment of their highest faculties, and the realization of their providential mission upon earth. For the scattered rays of religious truth which were held by the different nations and races of men under paganism were derived from primitive revelation, and it is only when these are brought within the focus of the light of universal truth that their complete significance is appreciated and they are seen in all their original splendor. The Catholic Church, in this aspect, is the reintegration of natural religion with the truths contained in primitive revelation and their perfect fulfilment. Moreover, there is no truth contained in any of the ancient religions before

* St. Matt. xxviii. 18, 19.

the coming of Christ, or affirmed by any of the heresies since that event, or that may be hereafter affirmed, which is not contained, in all its integrity, in Catholicity. This is only saying, in other words, The Catholic Church is catholic.

But these men appear to regard Christianity as still an unorganized mass, and they are possessed with the idea that the task is imposed upon them to organize the Christian Church; and this work occupied and perplexed them not a little in their Unitarian biennial conference held in the town of Saratoga, in the United States of North America, in the month of September, in the year of our Lord eighteen hundred and seventy-six!

> "Poor wanderers! ye are sore distrest
> To find the path which Christ has blest,
> Tracked by His saintly throng;
> Each claims to trust his own weak will—
> Blind idol!—so ye languish still,
> All wranglers, and all wrong."*

Were the veil taken from their spiritual eyes, and did they behold the Church as she is, they would easily comprehend that her unbroken existence for nineteen centuries alone, saying nothing of what glory is in store for her in the future, is a more evident and conclusive proof of the divinity of her Founder than the mir-

* Dr. Newman.

acle of His raising Lazarus from the dead was to those who were actual witnesses of it. For, in raising Lazarus from the dead, He had but to deal with passive matter, and that for only an instant; whereas in founding His Church he had to exert His power and counteract all the attacks of the gates of hell, combined with the persecutions of the world and the perversities of men, during successive centuries until the end of all time. None but the living God could be the author of so potent, comprehensive, and indestructible a body as the Catholic Church. Of all the unanswerable testimonies of the divinity of Christ, there is none so forcible as that of the perpetual existence of the one, holy, Roman Catholic Church. The Catholic Church is the standing miracle of Christ.

The reverse sense of the statement of the Rev. Edward E. Hale on this point contains the truth. The Catholic Church welcomes all nations and races to her fold, and reintegrates the scattered truths contained in every religious system, not by way of reunion or composition, but by simplicity and unity in a divine synthesis; and as did the ancient Egyptians, and the Greeks, and the Romans, so also the modern Franks and Celts have served by their characteristic gifts to the development and progress of Christian truth.

In like manner the Saxons, with their peculiar genius and instincts, will serve, to their own greater glory, in due season, in the same great cause; perhaps they will do so by giving a greater development and a more scientific expression to the mystic life of the Church, and by completing, viewed from intrinsic grounds, the demonstration of the truth of her divine mission.

Leaving aside other misstatements and errors contained in the first part of this sermon from want of space, we pass on to what may be termed its pith. Mr. Hale starts with the hazardous question, "What is the Unitarian Church for?" As far as we can make out from repeated reading of the main portion of the sermon—for there reigns a great confusion and incoherence in his ideas—the Unitarian Church has for its mission to certify anew and proclaim the truth that "God is in man." "God in man," he says, "is in itself the basis of the whole Gospel." Undoubtedly "God is in man," and God is in the brute, and God is in every grain of sand, and God is in all things. God is in all things by His immensity—that is, by His essence, and power, and presence. But this is a truth known by the light of human reason, and taught by all sound philosophers, heathen and Christian. There was no need of the Gospel, nor of that "fearless-

ness" which, he tells us, "was in the Puritan blood," nor of the Unitarian Church, to teach this evident and common truth to mankind.

The Gospel message means more than that, and the Rev. Mr. Hale has some idea that it does mean more. He adds: "Every man is God's child, and God's Spirit is in every life." Again: "Men are the children of God really and not figuratively"; "The life of God is their life by real inheritance." After having made these statements, he attempts to give the basis and genesis of this relation of God to man as father to child:

"That the force which moves all nature is one force, and not many, appears to all men, as they study it, more and more. That this force is conscious of its own existence, that it is conscious of its own work, that it is therefore what men call spirit, that this spirit has inspired and still inspires us, that we are therefore not creatures of dumb power but children of a Father's love--this is the certainty which unfolds itself or reveals itself, or is unfolded or is revealed, as higher and higher man ascends in his knowledge of what IS."

That man, by the light of his reason, can, by the study of nature, attain to the idea of God and His principal attributes, as Spirit, as Creator, upholder of the universe, and as Providence, is no doubt true; but that, by the study of "the force which moves all nature," our own consciousness included, we can learn that we are the "children of a Father's love," does not fol-

low, and is quite another thing. It is precisely here that Unitarianism, as a consistent, intelligible religious system, crumbles into pieces. Nor can Unitarians afford to follow the Rev. Edward E. Hale in his attempt to escape this difficulty by concealing his head, ostrich-like, under the sand of a spurious mysticism, and virtually repudiating the rational element in religion by saying: "The mystic knows that God is here now. He has no chain of posts between child and Father. He relies on no long, logical system of communication," etc. The genuine mystic, indeed, "knows God is here," but He knows also that God is not the author of confusion, and to approach Him God does not require man to put out the light of his reason. He will tell us that the relation of God to all things as created being, and the relation of God to man as rational being, and the relation of God to man as father to child, are not one and the same thing, and ought not, therefore, to be confounded. The true mystic will further inform us that the first relation, by way of immanence, is common to all created things, man included; the second, by way of rationality, is common to the human race; the third, by way of filiation, is common to those who are united to God through the grace of Christ. The first and second are communicated

to man by the creative act of God, and are therefore ours by right of natural inheritance through Adam. The third relation is communicated to us by way of adoption through the grace of the new Adam, Christ, who is "the only-begotten Son of God." This relation is not, therefore, ours by inheritance. We "have received from Christ," says St. Paul to the Romans, "the spirit of adoption, whereby we cry: Abba, Father."* "By whom also we have access through faith into this grace, wherein we stand, and glory in the hope of the glory of the sons of God."† It is proper to remark here that it is an error very common among rationalists and a certain class of Unitarians to suppose that the relation of the soul to God by way of filiation, due to Christ, is intended as a substitute for our natural relations to God by way of immanence and rationality; whereas Christianity presupposes these, reaffirms, continues, completes, and perfects them, by this very gift of filiation with God. For it is a maxim common to all Catholic theologians that *gratia supponit et perficit naturam.*

Our intelligent mystic would not stop here. Proceeding further, he would say that to be really and truly children of God by inheritance implies our being born with the same identical

* Rom. viii. 15. † *Ibid.* v. 2.

nature as God. For to be a child by nature is not to have a resemblance to, or to be an image of the father, but consists in possessing the same identical essence and nature as the father.* If the son is equal to his father by nature, then he is also equal to his father in his natural capacities. Now, if every man, by nature, has the right to call God father, as the Rev. Mr. Hale and his co-religionists pretend, then all men by nature are equal to God, both in essence and attributes! Is this what Unitarians mean by "the divinity of human nature"? The Rev. E. E. Hale appears to say so when he tells us: "What we are struggling for, and what, if words did not fail us, we would fain express, is what Dr. James Walker called 'the identity of essence of all spiritual being and all spiritual life.'" All, then, that the believers in the divinity of Christ claim exclusively for Him is claimed by Unitarians equally for every individual of the human race. But the belief in the divinity of Christ is "the latest and least objectionable form of idolatry" —so the Rev. H. W. Bellows informs us in his volume entitled *Phases of Faith.* The Unitarian cure, then, for the evil of idolatry is by substi-

* "Sed ad hoc, quod sit filius, requiritur quod procedens ab altero similitudinem habeat ejus a quo procedit, et sit ejusdem naturæ cum eo" (St. Thom., Opus. contr. Græc., etc., cap. 3).

tuting an indefinite multitude of idols for one single object of idolatrous worship.

There is one class of Unitarians, to which the author of this sermon seems to belong, who accept boldly the consequences of their premise, and maintain without disguise that all men are by nature the equals of Christ, and that there is no reason why they should not, by greater fidelity to their nature, surpass Christ. Up to this period of time, however, they have not afforded to the world any very notable specimen of the truth of their assertion. Another class attempt to get over the difficulty by a critical exegesis of the Holy Scriptures, denying the authenticity or the meaning of those parts which relate to the miraculous conception of Christ, His miracles, and His divinity. A representative of the extreme wing on the right of Unitarianism replied, when this point was presented to him: "Oh! we Unitarians reject the idea of the Trinity as represented by Calvinists and other Protestants, for they make it a tritheism; but we accept the doctrine as holy mother Church teaches it"; while a leader of the extreme left admitted the difficulty, and in speaking of Dr. Channing, who championed the idea of the filiation of man to God, he said: "No intelligent Unitarian of to-day would attempt to defend the Uni-

tarianism of Dr. Channing." He was right, for no Unitarian, on the basis of his belief, can say consistently the Lord's Prayer; for the Catholic doctrine of the Incarnation is a rigorous necessity to any one who admits the infinite and the finite, and the necessity of a union of love between them which authorizes the finite to call the Infinite Father! One may bestow sympathy upon the pious feelings of that class of Unitarians of which Dr. Channing is the representative, but the less said about their theological science the better.

Our genuine mystic would not stop here. He would continue and show that the denial of the Incarnation involves the denial of the Trinity, and the denial of the Trinity reduces the idea of God to a mere abstraction. For all conception of real life is complex. The intellectual life of man in its simplest elements, in its last analysis, will be found to consist of three factors: Man as the thinker, one factor; the thing thought, the second factor; and their relation, the third factor:—or the lover, the beloved, and their relation; again, the actor, the thing acted upon, and their relation. Man cannot think, love, or act where there is nothing to think, to love, or to act upon. Place man where there is nothing except himself, and you have man *in posse*, but not as ac-

tual being, not living man. You have a unit, an abstraction, nothing more. But mere abstractions have no real existence. Our conception of life in accordance with the law which governs our intelligence is comprised in three terms—subject, object, and their relation.* There is no possible way of bringing out of a mere unit, as our absolute starting-point of thought, any intellectual conception whatever. But the Unitarian idea of God is God reduced to a simple, absolute unit. Hence the Unitarian idea of God is not the conception of the real, living God, but an abstraction, impotent, sterile — a non-existing God.

Our genuine mystic would proceed still further; he would affirm that infused light and love from above do not suspend or stultify the natural action of our faculties, but quicken, elevate, and transform their operations. He would apply, by way of analogy, the same process of thought in confirmation of the Catholic doctrine of the Trin-

* "Liquido tenendum est, quod omnis res, quamcumque cognoscimus, congenerat in nobis notitiam sui. Ab utroque enim notitia paritur, a cognoscente et cognito" (St. Augustine, *De Trinitate*, s. ix. c. xii.)—Wherefore, it must be clearly held that everything whatsoever that we know begets at the same time in us the knowledge of itself; for knowledge is brought forth from both, from the knower and from the thing known. Again, "Behold, then, there are three things: he that loves, and that which is loved, and love" (s. viii. c. x., *ibid.*)

ity. If there had been a time, he would say, when there was no object before God, then there would have been a period when God was not the real, living God, but only God *in posse*, non-existing. But this is repugnant to the real conception of God; therefore the true idea of God involves a co-eternal object. If, however, this co-eternal object was not equal to God in substance as well as in attributes, then there would have been a period when God did not exist in all His fulness. Now, this object, co-eternal and equal to God the Father, is what the Catholic doctrine teaches concerning Christ, the only-begotten Son of the Father, "begotten before all ages, consubstantial with the Father." But the Father and the Son being co-eternal and co-adequate, their relations to each other must have been eternal and equal, outflowing towards each other in love, commensurate with their whole nature. This procession of mutual love between Father and Son is what the Catholic doctrine teaches concerning the Holy Spirit. Thus we see, however imperfectly, that the Catholic doctrine concerning the Trinity presents to our minds nothing that is contrary to our reason, though it contains an infinite abyss of meaning beyond the present scope of our reason, but which we shall know when our reason is increased, as it will be, by

the gift of the light of glory. But every mystery of Christianity has an intelligible side to our natural reason, and it is the privilege and joy of a Christian while here upon earth to penetrate, by the light of faith, more and more deeply into their hidden, divine truth.

Again, the Unitarian is mistaken when he supposes that Catholics, in maintaining the Trinity, exclude the divine Unity. They include both in one. Herein again is found in man an analogy. Man is one in triplicity. Man is thought, love, and activity, and at the same time man is one. He thinks, he loves, he acts; there are not three distinct men, one who thinks, another who loves, and still another who acts. There is, therefore, a sense in which man is one in three and three in one. So there is in the Trinity. The Unitarians are right in affirming the divine Unity; their error consists in excluding the divine Trinity. Heresies are often right in what they affirm, and wrong in what they exclude or deny; which denial is the result of their breaking away from that divine Unity in whose light alone every truth is seen in its correlation with all other truths.

Our true mystic would not be content to rest here, but, soaring upwards upon the wings of divine light and love, and taking a more extended view, he would strive to show that where the

doctrine of the Trinity is not held either explicitly or implicitly, there not only the theory of our mental operations and the intellectual foundations of religion dissolve into a baseless fabric of a vision, but that also the solid basis of society, the true idea of the family, the right conception of the state and its foundations, and the law of all genuine progress, are wanting, and all human things tend towards dissolution and backward to the reign of old chaos.

We give another characteristic statement of the Rev. Edward E. Hale's opening sermon which must have grated harshly on the ears of the more staid and conservative portion of his audience; it is under the head of "The immanent presence of God." He says:

"The Roman Church will acknowledge it, and St. Francis and St. Vincent and Fénelon will illustrate it. But, at the same time, the Roman Church has much else on her hands. She has to be contending for those seven sacraments, for this temporal power, all this machinery of cardinals and bishops, and bulls and interdicts, canon law and decretals, so that in all this upholstery there is great risk that none of us see the shrine. So of the poor little parodies of the Roman Church, the Anglican Church, the Lutheran Church, and the rest of them."

Again:

"All our brethren in the other confessions plunge into their infinite ocean with this hamper of corks and floats, water-proof dresses lest they be wet, oil-cloth caps for their hair, flannels for decency, a bathing-cart here, a well-screened awning there—so much machinery before the bath that one hardly wonders if some men refuse to swim! For them there is this great apology if

they do not proclaim, as we must proclaim, God here and God now; nay, if they do not live, as we must live, in the sense of God here and God now. For us, we have no excuse. We have stripped off every rag. We have destroyed all the machinery."

The Rev. Mr. Hale regards the seven sacraments, the hierarchy, the canon law—briefly, the entire visible and practical side of the Church—as a "hamper," "machinery," "rags," and thinks there "is great risk that none of us see the shrine." The difficulty here is not where Mr. Hale places it.

"Night-owls shriek where mounting larks should sing."

The visible is not the prison of the invisible, as Plato dreamed, but its vehicle, as St. Paul teaches. "For the invisible things of God, from the creation of the world, are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, His eternal power also and divinity." * The author of this sermon is at least consistent in his error; as he believes in an abstract God, so he would reduce "the Church of the living God," "the body of Christ," to an abstract or non-existence. Suppose, for example, that the Rev. Edward E. Hale had reduced "all the machinery" of his own curiously-devised body to an abstraction before the Unitarian biennial conference was held at Saratoga; the world would have been deprived of the knowledge of that

* Romans i. 20.

"simplicity which it is the special duty of the Unitarian Church to proclaim." Think of the loss! For it was by means of the complex "machinery" of his concrete body that the Rev. E. E. Hale came in contact with the "machinery" of the Unitarian biennial organization at Saratoga, and, thus "upholstered," he publicly rants against all "machinery."

There may be too complex an organization, and too many applications of it, and too much made of these, owing to the necessities of our times, in the Catholic Church, to suit the personal tastes and the advanced stage of growth of the Rev. Edward E. Hale. But the Catholic Church does not exist solely for the benefit of Mr. Hale, or for any peculiar class of men, or any one race alone. He has and should have, and they all have, their own place and appropriate niche in her *all*-temple; for the Catholic Church takes up in her scope every individual and the human race entire. But there are others, with no less integrity of spiritual life and intelligence than he, who esteem those things of which he speaks so unappreciatingly as heavenly gifts and straight pathways to see more clearly the inner shrine and approach more nearly to the divine Presence. Are the idiosyncrasies of one man, though "thoroughly furnished and widely experienced," to be the norm of all other

men, and of every race? Men and races differ greatly in these things, and the Church of God is not a sect or conventicle; she is Catholic, universal, and in her bosom, and in her bosom alone, every soul finds its own place and most suitable way, and this with personal liberty and in accord with all other souls and the whole universe, to perfect union with God.

The difficulty with the Rev. E. E Hale is, he has missed his vocation. His place evidently was not in the assembled conference at Saratoga; for his calling is unmistakably to a hermit life. Let him hie to the desert, and there, in a forlorn and naked hermitage, amid "frosts and fasts, hard lodgings and thin weeds," in an austere and unsociable life, "unswathed and unclothed," *in puris naturalibus*, "triumphantly cease to be." The Rev. E. E. Hale is one-sided, and seems to have no idea that the Catholic Church is the organization of that perfect communion of men with God and each other which Christ came to communicate and to establish in its fulness upon earth, and is its practical realization. God grant him, and others like him, this light and knowledge!

But we would not have our readers think that all Unitarians agree with the Rev. E. E. Hale in his estimate of the visible or practical side of

the Church. We quote from a leading article in the *Liberal Christian*, under the head of "Spirit and Form in Religion," the following passage:

"It seems painfully indicative of the still undeveloped condition of our race that no truce or medium can be approximated in which the two great factors of human nature and society, the authority and supremacy of *spirit* and the necessity and usefulness of *form*, are reconciled and made to serve each other or a common end. Must inward spirituality, and outward expression of it in forms and w rship, be for ever in a state of unstable equilibrium? Must they ever be hostile and at cross-purposes? Must all progress be by a displacement in turn of each other—now an era of honored forms and then of only disembodied spirituality? There is probably no entire escape from this necessity. But surely he is the wisest man who can hold this balance in the evenest hand; and that sect or school, whether political, social, or religious, that pays the finest justice and the most impartial respect to the two factors in our nature, spirit and form, will hold the steadiest place and do the most good for the longest time. This is the real reason why Quakerism, with all its exalted claims to respect, has such a feeble and diminishing importance. It has oil in the lamp of the purest kind, but almost no *wick*, and what wick it has is made up of its *thee*-ing and *thou*-ing, and its straight coat and stiff bonnet. These are steadily losing authority; and when they are abandoned, visible Quakerism will disappear. On the other hand, Roman Catholicism maintains its place against the spirit of the age, and in spite of a load of discredited doctrines, very largely because of its intense persistency in forms, its highly-illumined visibility, its large handed legibleness; but not without the unfailing aid and support of a spirit of faith and worship which produces a devoted priesthood and hosts of genuine saints. No form of Christianity can boast of lovelier or more spiritual disciples, or reaches higher up or lower down, including the wisest and the most ignorant, the most delicate and the coarsest adherents. It has the subtlest and the bluntest weapons in its arsenal, and can pierce with a needle, or mow with a scythe, or maul with a mattock."

The same organ, in a later number, in speaking of the Saratoga conference, says:

> "The main characteristic of the meeting was a conscientious and reverent endeavor to attain to something like a scientific basis for our faith in absolute religion, and in Christianity as a consistent and concrete expression of it,"

and adds that the opening sermon of the Rev. Mr. Hale "had the merit of starting us calmly and unexcitedly on our course." Our readers will form their own judgment about what direction the course leads on which the Rev. Edward E. Hale started the Unitarians assembled at Saratoga in their seeking after a "scientific basis" for "absolute religion, and Christianity as a concrete expression of it"!

# XII.

# THE TRANSCENDENTAL MOVEMENT IN NEW ENGLAND.*

THIS volume reads pleasantly. There is attached to it a peculiar interest, and something of the charm of a romance, for those who have had some knowledge of the transcendental movement in New England and acquaintance with its leaders. The author has evidently written his account with feelings of sympathy and friendship, which he acknowledges, and these have led him to bring out all the good points of the movement, while its shortcomings, exaggerations, and absurdities are scarcely if at all hinted at. The style is clear and smooth, the narrative never falters; the writer has contrived to throw a certain halo around the leaders of transcendentalism,

* *Transcendentalism in New England:* A History. By Octavius Brooks Frothingham. New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons. 1876.

and succeeded in presenting in his book a series of ideal portraits calculated to impose somewhat upon strangers.

The author has not written a history, but an interesting sketch which will be useful, no doubt, to some future historian. To write a history, especially of a philosophical and religious movement such as transcendentalism pretended to be and really was, requires more than an acquaintance with persons and facts. One must comprehend its real origin, and have mastered and become familiar with his subject. This is a task which Mr. Frothingham has not accomplished.

Every heresy segregates its adherents from the straight line of the true progress of the human race, all deviations from which are, in the nature of things, either temporary or fatal. They live, for the greater part, outside of the cumulated wisdom and the broad stream of the continuous life of humanity. When the heresy has almost exhausted its derived life—for no heresy has a source of life in itself—and the symptoms of its approaching death begin to appear, the intelligent and sincere who are born in it are the first, at this stage of its career, to seek to regain the unbroken unity of truth. This is reached by two distinct and equally legitimate ways. The first class gains the knowledge of

the whole body of the originally revealed truth, from which its heresy cut it off, by tracing the truths retained by the sect to their logical connection with other no less important truths equally contained in the same divine revelation. The second class falls back upon the essential truths of natural reason; and as all supernatural truth finds a support in natural truth, it follows that the denial of any of the former involves an injury to the latter. Heresy is always a denial of one or more of the truths of divine revelation, and—a matter of much importance—always involves a mutilation of man's natural reason. Once the integral natural basis recovered, the repudiation of heresy as contrary to reason follows logically. But the experience of the human race, that of the transcendentalists included, shows plainly that nature does not suffice nature; and this class, at this moment, starts out to find a religion consonant with the dictates of reason, satisfactory to all their spiritual necessities, and adequate to their whole nature. They ask, and rightly, for a religion which shall find fast foundations in the human breast. This appeal can only be answered, and is only met, by the revelation given to the world in the beginning by the Author of man, completed in the Incarnation, and existing in its

entirety and in unbroken historical continuity in the Catholic Church alone.

This dialectical law has governed the course of all heresies, from which they could not by any possibility escape; the same law has governed the history of Protestantism on its native soil, in Germany, as well in old as in New England, and wherever it has obtained a foothold.

Our business at present is with those of the second class, under which head come our New England transcendentalists; and what is not a little amusing is the simplicity with which they proclaim to the world, in this nineteenth century of the Christian era, the truths of natural reason, as though these were new and original discoveries! They appear to fancy that the errors of Calvinism, the petty sect to which they formerly adhered, and their dreary experience of its rule, have been the sad lot of the whole human race! It is as if a body of men had been led astray into a cavern where the direct rays of the sun never penetrated, and, after the lapse of some generations, their descendants approach its mouth, breathe the fresh air, behold the orb of light, the mountains, the rivers, and the whole earth covered with trees, flowers, and verdure. For the first time this glorious world, in all its won-

derful beauty, bursts upon their view, and, in the candor of their souls, they flatter themselves that they alone are privileged with this vision, and knowledge, and enjoyment! So of transcendentalists. Their language—but, be it understood, in their sober moods—affects those whose mental sight has not been obscured by heresy somewhat like the speech of children when first the light of reason dawns in their souls. For the transcendental movement in New England was nothing else, in its first instance, than the earnest and righteous protest of our native reason in convalescence against a false Christianity on account of its absurd dogmas and its denial or neglect of rational truths.

Mr. Frothingham tells us that "he was once a pure transcendentalist," and that perhaps "his ardor may have cooled." We protest; and as a disinterested party we assure him that he writes with all the glow of youth, and in his volume he has furnished a pretty cabinet-picture, in *couleur du rose*, of transcendentalism in New England, without betraying even so much as the least sign of a suspicion of its true place in the history either of philosophy or religion. In seeking for the "distinct origin" of transcendentalism he traces it to the teachings of Kant, Cousin, Coleridge, and Carlyle.

The contact with the productions of these foreign philosophers as well as religious and literary writers undoubtedly stimulated and strengthened the transcendental movement in New England; but it did not originate it. The movement was the spontaneous growth of the New England mind, in accordance with the law which we have stated, aided by the peculiar influence of our political institutions, as will be shown further on. Its real authors were Channing, Alcott, and Emerson, who were neither affected at their start nor afterward—or but slightly, if at all—by foreign or extraneous influences.

Moreover, the Kantian philosophy afforded no logical foothold for the defence of the movement in New England. Were our New-Englander, who still clings to his early faith in transcendental ideas, to present himself to the philosophical offspring of Kant, he would no more pass muster than his old orthodox Protestant antagonist of the exclusive traditional school. The logical descendants of Kant are, in the region of philosophy, to use an Americanism, played out, and those who still keep up an existence will be found in the ranks of positivism, materialism, and blank atheism.

The idea of God, the immortality of the soul, the liberty of the will, the creation of the world—

these and all such ideas the descendants of Kant have politely conducted to the frontiers of philosophy, and dismissed each and every one, but not before courteously thanking them for their provisional services. Our New-Englander would appear to their eyes as a babe still in swaddling-clothes, or as a child learning to read by amusing itself with the pictures of old Mother Goose stories. Whatever hankering Mr. Frothingham and some few others may have after their first love of transcendental ideas—and those in New England with whom they are most in sympathy, one and all, are moving in the same direction—they are only in the initial stage of the process of evolution of the Kantian germ-cell, the product of Protestant protoplasm, and will end eventually in the same logical issues as their less sentimental German, French, and English *confrères*.

To give us a right history of transcendentalism, Mr. Frothingham must enlarge the horizon of his mental vision, and include within its scope a stretch of time which elapsed before his ancestors were led off by heresy into the cavern of obscurity. He will find a historical no less than a "dialectical basis" for its ideas or primary truths, and for other truths of natural reason of which he has not yet made the discovery, in the

writings of Clement of Alexandria, in Augustine, in Vincent of Lerins, in Anselm; and he will find it above all in Thomas of Aquin, whose pages contain all the truths, but purified from the admixture of error, of the pagan philosophers, as also of those who had preceded him in Christian philosophy—men whose natural gifts, as well as devotion to truth, were comparable, to say the least, with Immanuel Kant and his French, or English, or American disciples. Those profound thinkers maintained and demonstrated the truth of the great ideas which Kant, according to his own showing, neither dared affirm nor deny, and which the transcendentalists held for the most part without knowing exactly why. What those great men taught from the beginning has been always taught, even to our day, by all sound Catholic teachers in philosophy. So jealous has the supreme authority of the Church been in this matter of upholding the value of the natural powers of human reason against those who would exalt tradition at its expense or destroy its value by scepticism, that she has required, if they would teach philosophy in her name, as a test of their orthodoxy, a subscription to the following proposition: "Reason can with certitude demonstrate the existence of God, the spirituality of the soul, and the liberty of man."

Had the author of the volume which we are briefly reviewing read the *Summa* of St. Thomas, or only the chapters which treat of these subjects, and understood them—which is not, we hope, asking too much from an advanced thinker of our enlightened age, inasmuch as St. Thomas wrote this work in the "dark ages" for mere tyros—he would have gained a standpoint from which he might have done what he tells us in his preface was "the one purpose of his book—to define the fundamental ideas of philosophy, to trace them to their historical and speculative sources, and to show whither they tended" (p. viii.) Such a work would have been more creditable to his learning, more worthy of his intellectual effort, more satisfactory to intelligent readers, and one of permanent value. We commend to Octavius Brooks Frothingham the perusal and study of St. Thomas' *Summa*—above all, his work *Contra Gentiles*, which is a defence of Christianity on the basis of human reason against the attacks of those who do not admit of its divine revelation; or if these be not within his reach, to take up any one of the modern works on philosophy taught in Catholic colleges or seminaries to our young men.

After all, perhaps, the task might prove an ungracious one; for it would not be flattering

to the genius of originality, on which our transcendentalists pride themselves, to discover that these utterances of theirs concerning the value of human reason, the dignity of the soul, and the worth of man—barring occasional extravagant expressions attributable to the heat of youth—were but echoes of the voice of the Catholic Church of all ages, of the traditional teachings of her philosophers, especially of the Jesuitical school; all of which, be it said between ourselves, has been confirmed by the sacred decrees of the recent Vatican Council! Still, passing this act of humiliation on their part, it would have afforded them what our author says their system "lacked," and for which he has had recourse—in our opinion in vain—to the great German systems: namely, a "dialectical basis." He would have found in Catholic philosophy solid grounds to sustain every truth which the transcendentalists so enthusiastically proclaimed in speech, in poetry and prose, and which truths, in their practical aspect, not a few of them made noble and heroic sacrifices to realize.

To have secured such a basis would not have been a small gain, when one considers that these primary truths of reason are the sources from which religion, morals, political government, and human society draw their vitality, strength, and

stability. Not a small service to humanity is it to make clear these imperishable foundations, to render them intelligible to all, and transmit them to posterity with increased life and strength. It is well that this noble task of philosophy did not depend on the efforts of the transcendentalists; for Mr. Frothingham sadly informs us in his preface that "as a form of mental philosophy transcendentalism may have had its day; at any rate it is no longer in the ascendant, and at present is manifestly on the decline, being suppressed by the philosophy of experience, which, under different names, is taking possession of the speculative world" (p. vii.) Who knows what might have been the precious fruits of all the high aspiration and powerful earnestness which were underlying this movement, if, instead of seeking for the "dialectical basis of the great German systems," its leaders had cast aside their prejudices, and found that Catholic philosophy which had interpreted the divine oracles of the soul from age to age, consonant with man's original and everlasting convictions, and sustaining his loftiest and noblest hopes?

But with the best will in the world to look favorably on the practical results of the transcendental movement, and with sincere appreciation

of its leaders—for the effort was praiseworthy and the men were highly gifted—a feeling of sadness steals over us in reading this book, and we cannot help exclaiming with the poet Sterling:

> "O wasted strength! O light and calm
> And better hopes so vainly given!
> Like rain upon the herbless sea,
> Poured down by too benignant Heaven—
> We see not stars unfixed by winds,
> Or lost in aimless thunder-peals,
> But man's large soul, the star supreme,
> In guideless whirl how oft it reels!"

But this is not to be wondered at; for although these men had arrived at the perception of certain great truths, they held them by no strong intellectual grasp, and finally they suffered them to escape. Their intellectual fabric was the house built upon sand; when the storm came and the winds blew, it fell, and great was the fall thereof. This was the history of Brook Farm and Fruitlands, communities in which the two wings of transcendentalism attempted to reduce their ideas into practice. Here let us remark it would have increased the interest of the volume if its author had given to his readers the programme of Brook Farm, "The Idea of Jesus of Society," together with its constitutions. It is short, interesting, and burning with earnestness. There is, besides, scarcely any account of the sin-

gular enterprise of the group of idealists at Fruitlands; and the name of Henry Thoreau, one of the notables among transcendentalists, is barely mentioned, while to his life at Walden Pond there is not even an allusion. True, these experiments were, like Brook Farm, unsuccessful, but they were not without interest and significance, and are worthy of a place in what claims to be a history of the movement that gave rise to them; at least space enough might have been afforded them for a suitable epitaph.

We will now redeem our promise of showing how the influence of our political institutions aided in producing what goes by the name of transcendentalism. But before doing this we must settle what transcendentalism is; for our author appears to make a distinction between idealism and transcendentalism in New England. Here is what he says:

"There was idealism in New England prior to the introduction of transcendentalism. Idealism is of no clime or age. It has its proportion of disciples in every period and in the apparently most uncongenial countries; a full proportion might have been looked for in New England. But when Emerson appeared the name of idealism was legion. He alone was competent to form a school, and as soon as he rose the scholars trooped about him. By sheer force of genius Emerson anticipated the results of the transcendental philosophy, defined its axioms, and ran out their inferences to the end. Without help from abroad, or with such help only as none but he could use, he might have domesticated

in Massachusetts an idealism as heroic as Fichte's, as beautiful as Schelling's, but it would have lacked the dialectical basis of the great German systems" (p. 115).

If we seize the meaning of this passage, it is admitted that previous to the knowledge of the German systems Mr. Emerson had already defined the axioms, run out their inferences to the end, and anticipated the results of the German transcendental philosophy. But this is all that any system of philosophy pretends to accomplish; and therefore, by his own showing, the distinction between idealism and transcendentalism is a distinction without a difference.

Mr. Frothingham, however, tells us on the same page that "transcendentalism, properly so-called, was imported in foreign packages"; and Mr. Frothingham ought to know, for he was once, he tell us, "a pure transcendentalist"; and on pages 128 and 136 he criticises Mr. Emerson, who identifies idealism and transcendentalism. With the genius and greatness of the prince of the transcendentalists before his eyes, our author, as is proper, employs the following condescending language: "It is audacious to criticise Mr. Emerson on a point like this; but candor compels the remark that the above description does less than justice to the definiteness of the transcendental movement. It was something more

than a reaction against formalism and tradition, though it took that form. It was more than a reaction against Puritan orthodoxy, though in part it was that. It was in a very small degree due to study of the ancient pantheists, of Plato and the Alexandrians, of Plutarch, Seneca, and Epictetus, though one or two of the leaders had drunk deeply from these sources. Transcendentalism was a distinct philosophical system" (p. 136).

So far so good. Here is the place, if the author knows what he is talking about, to give us in clear terms the definition of transcendentalism as a distinct philosophical system. But what does he do? Does he satisfy our anticipations? Mr. Emerson, be it understood, does not know what transcendentalism is! Well, hear our author, who thinks he does. He continues: "Practically it was an assertion of the inalienable worth of man; theoretically it was an assertion of the immanence of divinity in instinct, the transference of supernatural attributes to the natural constitution of mankind. . . . Through all was the belief in the living God in the soul, faith in immediate inspiration, in boundless possibility, and in unimaginable good" (p. 137). Ordinarily when writers attempt to give a definition, or convey information of a "distinct philo-

sophical system," they give one to understand its first principles or axioms, its precise method, and its important conclusions, and particularly wherein it differs in these respects from other systems of philosophy. This is what Mr. Frothingham in the passage last quoted has led us to expect; but instead of this he gives to the reader mere "assertions" and "beliefs." And these assertions and beliefs every one knows who has heard Dr. Channing, or Mr. Emerson, or Mr. Alcott, or who has a slight acquaintance with their writings, to have been the sources of inspiration in their speech, which appear on almost every page they have written! Proof is needless; for there is no one who will venture a contradiction on this point. The men who were most influenced by the study of the philosophers abroad were neither the originators nor leaders of the so-called transcendental movement in New England—Brownson, Parker, and William Channing. Mr. Frothingham, we submit, has not made out his case, and has given too much credit where it was not due, while robbing others of their just merit, whatever that may be. If "transcendentalism was a distinct philosophical system," nowhere in his book has this been shown.

Transcendentalism, accepting the author's state-

ment as to its true character, was never a philosophical system in New England; and had its early disciples been content to cultivate the seeds sown by its true leaders, instead of making the futile attempt to transfer to our clime exotics from Germany which would not take root and grow in our soil, we should have had, in place of a dreary waste, stately trees whose wholesome and delicious fruits would now refresh us.

And now for our reasons why it was native to the soil from which it sprang. If we analyze the political system of our country we shall find at its base the maxim, "Man is capable of self-government." The American system exhibits a greater trust in the natural capacities and the inherent worth of man than any other form of political government now upon this earth. Hence all the great political trusts are made elective; hence also our recourse to short terms of office and the great extension among us of the elective franchise. The genius and whole drift and current of our political life runs in this direction. Now, what does this maxim mean, that "Man is capable of self-government"? It means that man is endowed by his Creator with reason to know what is right, true, and good. It means that man possesses free-will and can follow the right, true, and good. These powers constitute

man a responsible being. It supposes that man as he is now born is in possession of all his natural rights, and the primal tendencies of his native faculties are in accordance with the great end of his existence, and his nature is essentially good. But such views of human nature are in direct opposition to the fundamental doctrines of Puritanism and orthodox Protestantism. These taught and teach that man is born totally depraved, that his nature is essentially corrupt, and all his actions, springing from his nature, nothing but evil. Now, the political influence of our American institutions stimulated the assertion of man's natural rights, his noble gift of liberty, and his inalienable worth, while the religion peculiar to New England preached precisely the contrary. So that at the Revolution the political and religious principles of the New-Englander entered upon a conflict with each other, and in the long run the ballot-box beat the pulpit. For the former exerted its influence six days in the week, while the latter had for its share only the Sabbath. In other words, the inevitable tendency of our American political system is to efface from the minds of our people all the distinctive dogmas of the orthodox Protestant views of Christianity by placing them on a platform in accordance with man's natural

capacities, his native dignity, and with right and honorable views of God. Herein lies the true genesis of Unitarianism and its cogenitor, the transcendental movement in New England.

Dr. Channing was right in discarding the attempt to introduce the worse than idle speculation of the German and French philosophical systems in New England. "He considered," so says his biographer, "pretensions to absolute science quite premature; saw more boastfulness than wisdom in ancient and modern schemes of philosophy; and was not a little amused at the complacent confidence with which quite evidently fallible theorists assumed to stand at the centre, and to scan and depict the panorama of existence." "The transcendentalists," he tells James Martineau in 1841, "in identifying themselves a good deal with Cousin's crude system, have lost the life of an original movement." In this last sentence Dr. Channing not only anticipated history but also uttered a prophecy.

But how about a philosophy whose mission it is to maintain all the great truths for which he so eloquently and manfully fought? How about a conception of Christianity which places itself in evident relations with human nature and the history of the universe?—a religion which finds its sanctuary in man's soul, and

aims at the elevation of his finite reason to its archetype and its transformation into the Infinite Reason?

Unitarianism in New England owes its existence to the mistaken supposition that Calvinism is a true and genuine interpretation of Christianity. "Total depravity," "election," "reprobation," "atonement," etc., followed, it was fancied, each other logically, and there was no denying one without the denial of all. And as it was supposed that these doctrines found their support in that of the divinity of Christ, the denial of the divinity of Christ followed as a matter of course. Men had grown to detest so heartily the "five points" of Calvinism that they preferred rather to be pagans than suckled in such a creed. But why did they not study the philosophy of the Catholic schools? Catholicity was represented in New England. Is it probable, is it reasonable to suppose that our New-Englanders, who have a strong vein of earnest religious feeling in their nature, would have gone across the ocean among the will-o'-the-wisps of the realms of thought to find a support for the great truths which they were so enthusiastic in affirming, when at their very doors was "the Church which has revealed more completely man to himself, taken possession of his inclinations, of his

lasting and universal convictions, laid bare to the light those ancient foundations, has cleansed them from every stain, from every alien mixture, and honored them by recognizing their impress of the Divinity"?

But Mr. Frothingham tells us: "The religion of New England was Protestant and of the most intellectual type. Romanism had no hold on the thinking people of Boston. None besides the Irish laboring and menial classes were Catholics, and their religion was regarded as the lowest form of ceremonial superstition" (p. 107); and almost in the same breath he informs his readers that "the Unitarians of New England were good scholars, accomplished men of letters, humane in sentiment and sincere and moral in intention" (p. 110). Is Octavius Brooks Frothingham acquainted with all "the ceremonial superstitions" upon this earth, and does he honestly believe that the Catholic religion is "the lowest form" of them all? Or—what is the same thing—does he think that the "good scholars and accomplished men of letters" of New England thought so? Perhaps such was his impression, but that it was common to this class of men we emphatically deny. No one stood higher among them than Dr. Channing, and his estimate of the Catholic religion was certainly not the same as

Mr. Frothingham's. It would be difficult to find in a non-Catholic writer a higher appreciation of her services to humanity, and more eloquent descriptions of certain aspects of the Catholic Church, than may be found in his writings. Mr. Frothingham ought to know this, and only the limits of our article hinder us from citing several such instances. Is he aware that President John Adams headed the subscription-list to build the first Catholic church in Boston? Our author, by his prejudices, his lack of insight, and limited information, does injustice to the New England people, depreciates the intelligence and honesty of the leaders in Unitarianism, and fails to grasp the deep significance of the transcendental movement.

He does injustice to the people of Boston especially, who, when they heard of the death of the saintly Bishop Cheverus, tolled the bells of the churches of their city to show in what veneration they held his memory; and, if he was not of the age to have listened, he must have read the eloquent and appreciative eulogium preached by Dr. Channing on this great and good man. And Bishop Cheverus was the guide and teacher of the religion of the Irish people of Boston!

Mr. Frothingham will not attempt to make a distinction between the "Catholic religion" and

"the religion of the Irish menial and laboring classes"—a subterfuge of which no man of intelligence and integrity would be guilty. The Irish people—be it said to their glory—have from the beginning of their conversion to Christianity kept the pure light of Catholic faith unsullied by any admixture of heresy, and have remained firm in their obedience to the divine authority of the Holy Church, in spite of the tyranny, of the bitterest persecution of its enemies, and all their efforts of bribery or any worldly inducements which they might hold out. When our searchers after true religion shall have exhausted by their long and weary studies Zoroaster, Pythagoras, Svenalis, Plato, Epictetus, Brahma, Buddha, Confucius, Mahomet, and any other notable inventor of philosophy or religion; when they have gathered up all the truths scattered among the different heresies in religion since the Christian era, the end of all their labors will only make this truth the plainer: that the Catholic Church resumes the authority of all religions from the beginning of the world, affirms the traditions and convictions of the whole human race, and unites, co-ordinates, and binds together all the scattered truths contained in every religious system in an absolute, universal, divine synthesis.

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